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THE

CHRISTIAN SABBATH:

ITS

HISTORY, AUTHORITY, DUTIES, BENEFITS, AND CIVIL RELATIONS.

A Series of Discourses

BY

THE REV. N. L. RICE. D. D.
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THE REV. HARVEY D. GANSE.
THE REV. WILLIAM ADAMS, D. D.
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WITH A SKETCH OF THE SABBATH REFORM BY THE SECRETARY OF THE NEW YORK SABBATH COMMITTEE.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

Sketch of the Sabbath Reform..... 5

The Origin and History of the Sabbath..... 31

The Authority and Perpetuity of the Christian Sabbath.. 77

The Duties of the Sabbath..... 113

The Benefits of the Sabbath..... 195

Civil Relations of the Sabbath..... 233

SKETCH OF THE SABBATH REFORM.

THE literature of the Sabbath in this country is singularly meagre. No considerable treatise is known to have been issued for a quarter of a century. The present contribution claims to be little more than a monogram: still leaving to be supplied the discussion of a vital question in its manifold relations.

The Discourses in this volume, form a part of the series delivered before crowded assemblies in the winter of 1862, on the invitation of the New York Sabbath Committee, by the Rev. Drs. Rice, Hague, Ganse, Adams, Foster, Vinton, and Schaff, in the Fifth-Avenue Presbyterian, Collegiate Reformed Dutch, Madison-Square Presbyterian, Madison-Avenue Baptist, St. George's Episcopal, and St. Mark's Lutheran churches. The Sermon of the REV. DR. FOSTER, on the *Abuses* of the Sabbath, was unwritten, and his health did not permit him to prepare it for the press. That of the REV. DR. SCHAFF has not yet been furnished for publication.

The Committee, under whose auspices these admirable Sermons were delivered, have conducted their reforms in a manner to have arrested the attention of reflecting men. The April number of the American Theological Review contains an able article on "*The Perpetual Observance of the Sabbath*," by Professor Smyth,

of Bowdoin College, Me., in which expression is given to the interest awakened by this enterprise. After glancing at the history of the New York Sabbath Committee's labors, Prof. S. adds:

"Such results are a sufficient proof of the wisdom and energy with which the efforts of the Committee have been conducted. They shed light also upon the true method of prosecuting reformatory measures under a free government. The success which in so large a measure has attended the enterprise to which we have referred, is manifestly, in great part, due to the conceptions its authors have entertained of the Christian theory of reform. Frankly avowing their principles, and tenaciously adhering to them, they have avoided theoretical entanglements, casuistry and logomachy. Aiming at feasible ends, they have made practical issues. No ground has been taken from which they have been forced to retreat. Every advance has been a victory. Relying upon the power of truth, they have wasted no time in crimination and recrimination. Believing in the instrumentalities divinely instituted, they have used them [redacted] and perseveringly, without adding or working any noisy machinery. The country at large has known little of their labors. Even in the city of New York, few appreciated the importance and power of the movement until the end was in many particulars gained. It is refreshing to witness this practical faith in truth, and in the efficiency of calm, quiet, manly, Christian action."

A brief sketch of the methods and results of the first five years of this Sabbath movement may not be without interest to the readers of this volume.

Thoughtful men were alarmed at the rapid drift toward popular neglect or profanation of the sacred day. The city had assumed the proportions of a great metropolis, attracting vast numbers of European immigrants, and outstripping the proportionate means of moral and religious culture. Demoralizing influences had fearfully

multiplied, with no adequate counteraction or restraint. Public sentiment had been corrupted or perverted by a vicious press and party intrigue. The machinery of government had largely passed into the control of the classes contributing least to its support, and most interested in staying the administration of justice. Law had lost its wonted supremacy, and our self-governing institutions were fast losing their prestige and power. Material interests overshadowed and supplanted the moral and spiritual. The Sabbath became in many quarters, and among large classes of the city, the gala-day of the godless; the harvest-day of avarice; the high-day of vice and crime. It seemed a hopeless undertaking to rescue it from even the grossest abuses of its civil rights.

But there were those who had sufficiently studied the history and relations of the Sabbath to cherish and act on the conviction, that its loss would involve not only irreparable injury to all moral and religious interests, but the inevitable sacrifice of our civil and social institutions. They had, indeed, to face the discouragements just alluded to, and the further circumstance that the repeated efforts to avert this and kindred evils, spasmodic and ill-judged as many of them were, had failed of their object, and only aggravated the disease they were meant to cure. This fact, however, rightly considered, was suited to inspire caution, energy and prayer. After years of reflection and consultation, a meeting of leading Christian citizens was convened, April 1, 1857; the subject was discussed; and a "COMMITTEE to promote the better observance of the Sabbath" was appointed, consisting of about twenty members, connected with eight different Christian denominations.

The form of the organization has many practical advantages. It is simple, compact, and unostentatious. Without the prestige of numbers, and so without its embarrassments, it has none of the temptations of a "society" to undertake extreme and impracticable measures, regardless of that general public sentiment on which, under Providence, the power and success of all stable reforms must ultimately rest. So long as a "committee" conduct their enterprises in a spirit and on principles suited to enlist the confidence of all right-minded citizens, and with the manifest aim to promote the public welfare, the very paucity of numbers becomes an element of strength; for every good man may see that while a cause he approves is fitly *championed*, yet he, and all like him, must personally enter the ranks as the exigencies of the conflict demand his service. The Press, too, comes to lend a willing support to a just and important interest, when it has no "organ" to advocate questionable or exclusive theories, and no aims beyond the well-being of the great community for whose benefit both profess to labour.

The *lay*-feature of the Committee was adopted and has been perpetuated for obvious reasons. The primary objects of the movement having respect to the invasions of the civil Sabbath, *civilians* seemed best suited to promote them. The single fact that active business-men turn aside from their pressing avocations and devote time and influence and wealth to the suppression of offences so glaring as to require the intervention of the magistracy, of itself tends to disentangle the Sabbath question from its chief embarrassment, and to define its civil relations as distinguished from its religious obli-

gations so clearly as to baffle the unscrupulous enemies and invaders of both its civil and sacred sanctions. And we have yet to learn that any of our honoured and hard-working pastors undervalue or would discourage the active coöperation of prudent laymen in this and kindred Christian enterprises "too heavy" for their own over-burdened hands. Rather would they adopt the prayer of Moses: "Would God all the Lord's people were prophets!" It is quite certain that the manifold relations of this enterprise to civil authorities, legislative, judicial and executive, as well as to the general public, have been freed from complication and prejudice by the fact that its interests were directed by Christian citizens chosen from secular callings.

The first step taken by the Committee was a *reconnoissance.* The mere general fact of neglected or abused Sabbaths seemed an inadequate basis for reformatory action. A census of Sunday traffic, developed the fact that nearly ten thousand (9,692) places of business, including more than five thousand dram-shops (5,385,) were open to the public. Places of public amusement were personally inspected by members of the Committee —sometimes at the peril of life—at which thousands of men, women and children were gathered on the Lord's day for purposes of diversion, dissipation and sin. Let it suffice, without repeating the revelations in "The Sabbath as it was and as it is" (No. I.) and in other documents of the Committee, that the more thorough and extended the inquiry, the deeper and more painful became the conviction of the prevalent and formidable character of the evils to be encountered. They had existed so long almost without rebuke; they were so intrenched in

the avarice of some classes and in the love of sensual pleasure in others; they were so strengthened by Old World training and prejudices, and were pandered to so industriously by the German and English Sunday Press; and ignorance or indifference as to their nature and extent were so profound on the part of the Sabbath-keeping community, that exposure and reformation seemed to border on the chimerical if not the impossible.

It may be added, as illustrating the position of things five years ago, that laws protecting the Sabbath had been, for a quarter of a century at least, practically obsolete; that the police department was in a chaotic state —in the change from the Municipal to the Metropolitan *regime;* that the judicial and municipal officers were largely the candidates of the Sunday liquor interest; and that the commercial crisis of '57 came upon the city like a tempest the very month of the completed organization for this movement. And it will thus be seen that few enterprises could encounter more disheartening circumstances, or more demand faith, prudence and zeal on the part of their managers.

The grand aim of the Reform being to correct and arouse public sentiment as to the claims and perils of the Sabbath, the three principal agencies for this purpose—the Pulpit, the Press and Personal influence—have been enlisted in such measure as seemed best calculated to secure the desired result.

The incipient plans of the Committee were laid before a meeting of more than one hundred of the *Clergy* of the city, and received their unanimous sanction in a series of Resolutions that will live in the literature of the Sabbath while Sabbaths last. Not far from one

hundred sermons on the subject were simultaneously preached, soon after, on the invitation of the Committee. The recent series of sermons by Pastors of seven denominations, before thronged assemblies, has tended to deepen the conviction of the authority and value of the Sabbath and of the importance of measures for its sanctification. Throughout the reform, the counsel and coöperation of the ministry have been cordially given and highly prized.

But, valuable as has been the aid of the Pulpit, the coöperation of the *Press* has been invaluable in effecting the revolution in general public sentiment which laid the foundation for successful practical reforms. There was a manifest propriety in the discussion of questions of public order and morality as related to the invasion of the national day of rest and worship by journals whose columns are pledged to truth and virtue. Without fee or reward, the leading daily newspapers of the city have advocated and defended all the prominent measures inaugurated by the Committee with an ability and good temper that carried conviction to the public mind, and with a unity that paralyzed opposition. Every attempt of the enemies of the Sabbath to complicate the question with party politics—and many have been made—has been rebuked by the honest press of all parties. Besides the intrinsic value of this coöperation, it more than neutralised the persistent and shameless opposition of the Sunday Press and its allies. More than once it silenced the atheism and licentiousness of the German Press. The Weekly Religious Press, it scarcely need be said, has lent an *almost* unanimous and most cordial support to this movement. In reviewing the whole course

of the Sabbath Reform, it is obvious that its manifold successes and its present vantage-ground are intimately related to the fact that nearly one hundred millions of copies of New York newspapers have borne to their readers articles friendly to the restoration and conservation of our civil Sabbath.

The official communications of the Committee have been confined to their series of "*Documents.*" Facts and arguments have been embodied relating to the particular measure in hand, addressed to the reason and conscience of thoughtful citizens—studiously avoiding appeals to passion or prejudice, and leaving to their proper realm those disputed questions of ethics and theology about which there may be honest differences of opinion. A monopoly of vituperation and personal abuse has been left to the enemies of the Sabbath, and a tone of moderation and forbearance has been aimed at consistent with the humane and sacred objects contemplated. The gratifying fact that none of the twenty official papers of the Committee have been subjected to unfriendly criticism attests the public appreciation of this policy, and is grateful to those who have deliberately chosen it irrespective of the precedents of modern reforms.

The distribution of the Committee's documents has varied from 2,000 to 10,000 or 20,000 copies severally, as the issues have required. They have been placed gratuitously in the hands of influential citizens, public officers, editors, clergymen, etc. Three important documents in the German language have been circulated by thousands through the missionary employed by the Committee among the Germans, and among German pastors and editors; and several hundred copies have been sent to

leading men in Germany. "Railroads and the Sabbath" (No. 2.) was directed to thousands of directors and employés of Railway companies. "The Broderic Sunday pageant" (No. 10.) was sent to 4,000 Firemen. "The Sabbath and the Pulpit" (No. 20.) was mailed to nearly 5,000 clergymen. "The Plea for the Sabbath in War" (No. 19.) was addressed to all the officers of Government, and to as many military officers as could be reached with certainty; and packages were sent for the supply of all the regiments in the army of the Potomac. After the noble Sabbath Order of Gen. McClellan was issued, the Committee requested the American Tract Society to publish it in connection with Washington's Order respecting the Sabbath and Profane Swearing; and 30,000 copies in English and 24,000 in German have been distributed in the army, at the joint expense of the two associations, besides some 50,000 copies through the separate channels of the Tract Society.

The object of all these movements has been the creation of an intelligent, healthful sentiment friendly to a due observance of the Sabbath. This done, it was believed, and has been demonstrated, that specific reforms would work themselves out with little direct effort. Whoever may attempt the reverse, and seek to carry out reformatory schemes in the face of an indifferent or hostile public sentiment, may expect disaster and defeat.

It remains to notice the third element of influence—*personal exertion.* In its very nature secluded from public observation, little can properly be said of its methods or results. There is reason to believe that it has not been the least effective of the agencies employed. In needful investigations and explorations; in personal confer-

ences with the conductors of the Press, public authorities, and legislative committees; in procuring signatures to memorials; in securing the passage of wholesome laws, or defending them when assailed; in providing adequate funds without public appeals of any sort therefor, and in the careful direction of every branch of an expanding enterprise, the several members of the Committee have cheerfully devoted no inconsiderable amount of time and effort to an object worthy of the sacrifice: with abundant proofs, that, under the blessing of the Most High, they have not labored in vain nor spent their strength for naught.

When the Committee began their labours, they anticipated years of preliminary effort before it would be expedient to attempt specific reforms. The promptness of the recoil from the abuses and dangers brought to light in the early papers of the Committee, induced a speedier attempt than had been purposed to restrain some of the more offensive forms of Sabbath profanation. Beginning with those which admitted of no apology or defence at the bar of public opinion, the several issues made by the Committee may be classified as follows:

1. *Offences against the Public Peace and Order.*
2. *Invasions of Public Morals.*
3. *Protection of the Sabbath in War.*
4. *Promotion of the general Sabbath Reform.*

A brief statement of the leading facts in the history of these several movements will illustrate the policy of the Committee and the results of their labours.

1. OFFENCES AGAINST THE PUBLIC PEACE AND ORDER.

Of this class the *Sunday news-crying* nuisance was the most obtrusive and least defensible. It had, indeed,

gained a foot-hold, by a quarter of a century of unmanly toleration, strong enough to secure for it the immunity of extra-judicial sanction: for the then Recorder of the city went out of his way to protect the "poor friendless boys" who were hawking "a public necessity," and to assure the Grand Jury that he "didn't think much of Sunday Laws—which were well enough as abstract morality, but altogether too slow for the age!" The Sunday papers defended the nuisance most pertinaciously—some of them having *Daily* issues—with the evident purpose of driving from the field of discussion and reform any body of men bold enough to interfere with their prescriptive monopoly of traffic and noise on the Lord's Day. So violent was this onslaught that one of the Editors of the Sunday ——— felt constrained to protest against it as having "its origin in the unquiet minds of two or three degraded and depraved individuals, who have most unworthily worn the vestments of the priesthood, and who now seek popular preferment by pandering to the passions and the lusts of the very worst classes of society;" and he proceeds to declare: "I am totally misrepresented by the Press of which I am Editor, and which through some, to me, unexplained means, has been made the *organ of folly, falsehood, and ribaldry.*"

The only public measure resorted to, after the scornful treatment of a respectful remonstrance addressed to the several Proprietors of the Sunday newspapers, was the preparation and presentation of a "Memorial to the Mayor and Police Commissioners, against the crying of newspapers on Sunday," on the grounds that it was a school of vice to the newsboys; that their evil example was disastrous to the children of the city; that

it was an unwarrantable monopoly of traffic; that it invaded the claims of courtesy and good neighbourhood, and that thus it was a violation of the rights of good citizens. This memorial received the signatures of a hundred or more of our most prominent citizens. The Commissioners immediately issued an order for the suppression of the evil. The Sunday papers counselled resistance and threatened vengeance. But after a few months of persevering yet forbearing effort, the nuisance was wholly abated, and is now remembered only with a feeling of surprise that a civilized and a Christian community should have so long endured so gross an outrage.

The Broderic Sunday Pageant furnished another occasion for testing the strength of the public sentiment on this question. The programme for this sham-funeral proposed to marshal the whole Fire Department, some 4,000 strong, with banners, bands of music, and all the paraphernalia of a popular pageant, on the Sabbath. It was postponed from week to week on account of storms, but notwithstanding the remonstrances of the Press, was always set down for *Sunday*. This precedent seemed needless and impertinent. A Protest against this abuse of the Sabbath, with 550 signatures, was presented to the officers of the Department and sent to the Foremen of 160 Fire Companies; and when it was determined to disregard it, the Protest was inserted in all our Public Journals. The issue was fairly joined. The result proved that Sunday Pageants are at a discount in our city. The entire procession numbered 541—not half of whom were firemen; and their long march through our streets was but a lugubrious advertisement of the failure of their boasted display. There has been no repetition of the wrong.

The attempt to pervert the *Central Park* into a Sunday holiday arena compelled the Committee's attention. The entering wedge was small—only pleasure-boats on the Lake, licensed carriages for Sunday drives, refreshment-houses for Sunday visitors, and like provisions for a European rather than an American use of those magnificent grounds. The danger of the formal sanction of this insidious beginning was more imminent than the public were aware. The Committee addressed a respectful Letter to the Commissioners, claiming that the entire Sabbath arrangements of the Park should be such as neither to offend nor corrupt the public conscience. They urged the necessity of adopting such a principle, as a bar to innumerable perversions; as alone consistent with the spirit of our laws and institutions; as simply just and equal to all citizens and taxpayers; as preventing the popular demoralization uniformly attending Sunday license, and as due to the rights and feelings of the *Christian* community. This Letter was given to the newspaper Press, and was generally accepted as a just and temperate exposition of a perplexing question. It is believed that it expressed the views substantially of a majority of the worthy Commissioners of the Park, and that there will be no deviation from the principles suggested in the regulations for the enjoyment of that costly and invaluable place of public recreation.

2. Invasions of Public Morals.

Far more formidable issues presented themselves as the reform advanced. Systems of evil overspread the city vast enough in their proportions to discourage the hope of their overthrow. Some of them remain unre-

buked: others have been subjected to the restraints of law and public opinion. The most prominent of the latter has been the *Sunday Liquor Traffic.* Availing itself of the full pockets and idle time of the labouring classes, Sunday was the harvest-day of the Dram-shops—and of the Prisons.

After months of consultation and investigation, the Committee spread the results of their inquiries before the public in a temperate paper, (No. 5,) showing the extent and accessories of the Sunday Traffic in liquor, and its illegality; urging its suppression on the ground that it engenders pauperism, crime, lawlessness and irreligion; and suggesting adequate remedies. The subject was earnestly discussed by the secular, religious and Sunday Press for several months. Public sentiment rapidly ripened into determined hostility against a selfish and demoralizing business, and obviously demanded the intervention of the Magistracy. At length the Committee embodied the views of good citizens in a Memorial to the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, asking for protection and relief, which speedily had some six hundred signatures of a character to indicate the readiness of the entire body of our respectable population to append their names, if requested. A counter-memorial, German and English, received some 1,200 signatures, and was presented by a deputation of anti-Sunday "clergymen;" but, five-sixths of the names could not be found in the Directory, or were set down as Liquor-dealers, segar-sellers and other parties in interest! The Commissioners unanimously passed a series of pertinent resolutions, the fifth of which took the ground "That present abuses in disregarding the Sunday laws, particu-

larly in public exhibitions on Sundays, and trafficking in liquors and other like things, should, so far as the law allows, be prevented by the whole power of the police force and the magistracy." This action was followed by a General Order of Superintendent Pilsbury to the Captains of Precincts, "instructing the members of their commands to see that all places where intoxicating liquors are publicly kept or sold on Sunday shall be closed in future on that day."

From that time (Aug. 1859) to the present, the contest has continued between the Police authorities under the successive administrations and the Sunday Liquor Dealers, with multiform attempts at evasion or resistance, but with increasing vigour and success. Finding that the accumulation of complaints to the number of more than 30,000 in the office of the District Attorney failed to deter the violators of law, the Police were instructed to make arrests of offenders. When magistrates interposed to discharge their friends from arrest, they were properly restrained from unlawful interference. And when Sunday courts were held open for the express purpose of facilitating the discharge of Sunday lawbreakers, arrests were deferred till the evening, so as to secure at least a night of reflection in the station-house on the conduct of the day. Many of the Sunday dealers are known to prosecute their business still through side entrances and back-doors; but as a public system, the traffic in liquors on the Sabbath is substantially overthrown.

The results as affecting public morals are worthy the attention of political economists as well as of the friends of the Sabbath. Contrasted with the period preceding

the effort for the Suppression of Sunday Liquor selling, the following statistics tell the instructive story:

The arrests for intoxication, disorder and crime, on Sunday, during eighteen months of the period —1857–58—preceding the agitation of the Sunday Liquor Question, exceeded those of *Tuesday* (taken as the average of the week-days) by TWENTY-FIVE PER CENT., as officially reported.

But the statistics of the Police Department show that during the twenty-nine months ending January 1, 1862, *the Tuesday's arrests exceeded those of the Sunday's* by FORTY PER CENT., or a relative change of sixty-five per cent. The comparison of the actual results with those which would have followed had the Sunday Liquor Traffic continued without restraint, will show A SAVING OF 13,823 CASES OF VICE AND CRIME ON THE SUNDAYS OF TWENTY-NINE MONTHS, as the fruits of this beneficent reform.

In the charge to the Grand Jury of the Court of General Sessions for March, 1862, the Judge stated the gratifying fact—illustrative of the remark that "the criminal statistics of New York compared favorably with those of any city in the world,"—that there were now but *fifty* criminal cases on the calender for trial, against *two hundred and seventy-five* at the corresponding term one year ago.

The Sunday Theatres and Beer Gardens, by skillfully evading the then existing laws, profited for a time by the closing of the Sunday dram-shops. Intrenching themselves in quarters of the city chiefly inhabited by German immigrants; advertising in German papers under the title of "*Sacred* Concerts," and having their

performances in a foreign language, they had become a demoralizing agency of fearful proportions, almost without the knowledge of the American population. At least a score of these places were open to the public, and were crowded by men, women, and children every Sunday, with every conceivable appliance of sensual diversion, from comedy, tragedy, songs, dancing, acrobatic sports on the stage, to gambling, drinking, billiard-playing, bowling, shooting, and fighting in the auditorium and lobbies. Many of them were known houses of assignation and prostitution. The repeated attempts to bring this system under the decent restraints of the theatre law were nugatory. It defied the officers of justice, and outraged the rights of society. Depending confessedly on its Sunday profits for support, its managers combined to defeat all attempts to bring the system within the restraints of law and public sentiment.

The nature and extent of this evil were exposed in a pamphlet of 24 pages (Document No. 11), discussing the claims of foreigners to immunity for their vices, and vindicating the constitutional right of our legislature to restrain the abuses of our civil Sabbath, whether by native or foreign-born citizens. The discussion became general and animated between the organs of American sentiment and the German press, with their natural allies, the Sunday papers in English. The latter assumed the position that the Sunday Beer-Garden system was supported by the *entire* German population, and thus sought to impose upon political parties the idea that restraint of their "national customs" would involve the united hostility of that nationality. The large and respectable class of orderly and Christian Germans re-

sented this imputation. An immense gathering in Cooper Institute avowed their attachment to the laws and institutions of their adopted country; protesting "against the perversion of Sunday" by a portion of their countrymen as "bringing dishonour on the German name;" and approving the Sunday laws "as one of the strongest guarantees of our free institutions, as a wholesome check upon licentiousness and dissipation, and as a preventive of the pauperism and crime which must necessarily undermine and ultimately destroy the liberty of any people."

Our Sunday laws enacted fifty years ago did not contemplate such formidable offences as were found to exist among a large emigrant population; and it became necessary to seek the enactment of a statute more adequate to their suppression. The Sunday-Theatre Act of 1860 encountered the most virulent opposition. The theatre, brewing, and lager beer interests formed associations to resist the passage or enforcement of the law, raising funds and levying a tariff on the Sunday sales of lager for this purpose. Numerous delegations visited Albany, and paid agents were kept there to prevent the success of the measure. The proceeds of theatrical "benefits" were devoted to the same object. A German petition for the repeal of *all* Sunday laws, and remonstrance against the theatre law—claiming to have from 10,000 to 100,000 signatures—had 4,805 names appended to it; but of the first 317 names claiming to be "citizens of the city of New York," only 11 were found in the City Directory, and 5 of these were saloon-keepers and grocers! The respectable Germans rallied and sent a counter-petition, numerously signed. The act became a law

in April, 1860. The theatre proprietors generally defied the law, and continued to violate it—some of them openly, and one or two under the sham of a "*Shaker Congregation.*" The police authorities made frequent arrests—mostly on the day succeeding the offence. The counsel of the "House of Refuge," charged with the enforcement of the civil penalty, proceeded by suits and injunction orders to enforce the provisions of the act, and was soon face to face with parties who had long trifled with all the laws regulating theatrical amusements. In every suit he was successful. In every court where the question was raised, the constitutionality of the act, though contested by the ablest legal talent, was affirmed. Meanwhile, the criminal suits matured, and the leading offender was convicted before a jury. The appeal to the General Term of the Supreme Court resulted in the memorable decision of Judges Clarke, Sutherland, and Allen, sustaining the constitutionality of laws protecting the civil Sabbath. (See Doc. No. 18.) The result of this protracted contest has been the subjection to law of the most persistent and notorious offenders; the settlement of the principle that foreigners coming among us are to respect and obey the laws they find here, until they are regularly changed; and the vindication of our constitution from the sophisms of sceptical and lawless classes.

A vigorous onset was made on the legislature of 1861, to effect the repeal of the Sunday theatre act. Large sums of money were raised and expended for this purpose. Several meetings were held on Sunday, in Sunday theatres, to denounce the Sabbath and all laws for its protection, which were addressed by ex-"clergymen,"

actors, and other defenders of "liberty," amidst the fumes of lager and tobacco, and the profane babblings of an infidel throng. Petitions for the abrogation of all Sunday laws, boasting 25,000 signatures, but containing fewer names in fact than the aggregate number of lager and liquor sellers in New York—three-fourths of them all being *bogus*—were sent to Albany. It was not deemed needful to agitate the public or invite signatures to remonstrances. All that was done was to appear before the committee having the matter in charge, furnish information to the legislature as to the working of the law, and invite a meeting of Germans in Cooper Institute. An enthusiastic gathering of some 3,000 of them gave the legislature and the public to understand that Sunday beer-gardens were doomed by Germans themselves. Nevertheless, the committee on cities and villages, with a majority of its members from New York and Brooklyn, reported a bill authorizing the sale of malt liquors on Sunday and on all other days of the week. The minority of the committee, through the Hon. Mr. Ball of Rensselaer, presented an elaborate report against this and all Sunday license. The result was the defeat of the anti-Sunday scheme by a vote of 74 to 23—no less than 18 of the minority *representing* New York City and its vicinity. No subsequent effort has been made to disturb our Sunday laws.

An incidental result of this healthful agitation has been the suppression of the "*Concert Saloon*" system; first on Sundays, under the operation of the Sunday Theatre Act of April, 1860, and then on all days of the week, by the passage of the stringent law of April, 1862.

3. Protecton of the Sabbath in War.

The stirring events of our unhappy civil war involved new and imminent perils to the Sabbath and related interests. What with necessary inroads on the quiet and order of a time of peace, and the license regarded as almost inseparable from a state of war, the most serious apprehensions were entertained that the barriers of law and public sentiment so happily restored, might give way before the pressure of unexpected emergencies. For a time, the Sabbath seemed to be the chosen day for the movement and display of troops. Regiment after regiment, from this and other States, marched the length of the city, and embarked for the seat of war on Sunday, calling our idle population, young and old, by tens of thousands to witness the pageant. The Committee saw this drift of things with pain, but deemed it prudent to forego remonstrance until the public mind should resume something of calmness; when a brief appeal—"*Sabbath in War*"—was made to the public and to our municipal authorities, which had a ready response from the press and the people. Various incipient abuses were effectually checked by the police. The arrangements for forwarding troops were modified so as to leave the Sabbath mostly undisturbed —Adjutant-General Hillhouse omitting the Sabbath wholly from the programme which started a regiment for the seat of war each day for a period of some three weeks. The metropolis soon regained its wonted order and quiet, and has passed thus far through a period of war with steadily *diminishing* lawlessness and crime.

Meanwhile, the movements of our troops at the seat

of war became notoriously and needlessly defiant of the claims of the Sabbath. Nearly all the engagements of the three-months' volunteers were on Sunday—and their last humiliating defeat before Manassas was in a Sunday battle. The Christian sentiment of the country was outraged, and expressed itself in calm, sorrowful protest. The Committee, though contemplating chiefly local reforms in its organization, felt constrained to embody what they thought to be just and temperate views on the relations of the Sabbath to the war—see "*Plea for the Sabbath in War*," Doc. No. 19—which they gave to the press, and sent in Pamphlet form to the officers of government, civil and military,—thousands of copies having been placed in the hands of line and company officers and soldiers. The copy addressed to the newly-appointed Major-General commanding on the Potomac was accompanied by a private note, August 30, from one who "claimed more than a mere patriot's interest in his public career;" and expressing the conviction that "no single act would be more potent in conciliating and binding to himself the moral and religious element of the North, or more stimulate and reassure the Christian patriotism of the country, than one that should link his name with a restored Sabbath for the army and the nation." On the 6th of September, that memorable general order for the protection of the *rights* of soldiers and citizens to their Sabbath, which may be considered as the most signal moral incident of the war, issued from the cool brain and warm heart of General McClellan: and in a week's time it flew from camp to camp, and from heart to heart, throughout the loyal states; inspiring hope and faith and zeal for a cause thus

redeemed from association with impiety; and inaugurating the new *regime* of discipline, sobriety, patience and energy, under which, with the blessing of the Most High, our armies are gaining victory and renown.

4. PROMOTION OF THE GENERAL SABBATH REFORM.

The reaction in favour of the Sabbath from the repeated disasters to our arms in needless Sunday battles, and in connection with the noble utterances of the new General-in-Chief, providentially gave national proportions to a movement which had been chiefly local. The time had apparently arrived for inviting the coöperation of the friends of the Sabbath throughout the country in the effort to restore its foundations and restrain its invaders. Especially did the juncture seem favourable for the discussion of the great principles of divine and human legislation on which the Sabbath is based, whether in its sacred or civil relations. With this view the Committee issued their Circular Letter to the clergy—"*The Sabbath and the Pulpit*," Doc. No. 20—of which some 5,000 copies were mailed to pastors, besides its newspaper circulation. Numerous responses have been received to this Letter, and a more general discussion has been given to the Sabbath question by the Pulpit than perhaps ever before.

The Committee have aimed to keep the active friends of the Sabbath in various parts of this country and in Europe apprised of the progress of the Reform with which they were charged. Their Documents have been widely dispersed. Those in German have been sent in large numbers to leading Christians on the Continent. It is with unfeigned gratification that they observe a steady and healthful advance in Sabbath sentiment

throughout our country and in the Old World. Among other indications, we may note the energetic and successful movements in California for the enactment and enforcement of Sunday Laws; similar efforts in Nevada; the organization of Sabbath Defence Committees in various cities, and the wide discussion of the subject in the Pulpit and by the Press. In Great Britain, unwonted attention is given to the suppression of Sabbath profanations; and on the Continent, the proceedings at the Geneva meeting of the "Evangelical Alliance" have led to the organization of efficient Sabbath Associations in Switzerland and elsewhere, with the promise of fruitful results. It may be that the providential prominence given to the Sabbath in our national humiliations and triumphs, may serve to hold it up to the world with new impressiveness as inseparably associated with order, law, liberty and religion: so that a restored Union and a recovered Sabbath may together vindicate the principles and illustrate the conditions of self-governing institutions to the nations of the earth.

R. S. C.

THE

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE SABBATH,

BY THE

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THE

Origin and History of the Sabbath.

SINCE the fall of man, the conflict between truth and error, religion and irreligion, sound morals and immorality, has been incessant, and it must continue till the God of truth and righteousness "shall set judgment in the earth." As in all other conflicts, so in this, there are cardinal points around which the contest has been most obstinate—each of the parties convinced that success or failure depends upon the gaining and holding of these. One of the most important of these points is the question respecting the divine authority of the Sabbath, both as a religious and civil institution. The estimate put upon the question by both the friends and the enemies of religion and morals, is indicated by the persevering earnestness with which the controversy

has been carried on. In the first of a series of discourses on this great subject, our attention may be properly occupied with *the Origin and History of the Sabbath.*

The subject is far too extensive to be fully treated in a single discourse. I shall be under the necessity, therefore, of contenting myself with a very brief presentation of some of the leading principles and facts.

I. The origin of the Sabbath is distinctly intimated in the text, "The Sabbath was made for man." From which we learn,

1. That the Author of the Sabbath is the Creator of man. He who made man, and knew perfectly what institutions would meet his necessities, appointed for him the Sabbath. Six parts of his time were allowed for ordinary avocations; the seventh was set apart for sacred duties and enjoyments. On this point there can be no controversy between believers in the inspiration of the Scriptures. They may
fer respecting the time when the Sabbath
instituted. They may differ as to the
on, whether it is of universal obligation,

or whether it is a Jewish institution. They may also differ on the question, whether the Christian Sabbath is identical with the Jewish, with only the change of the day. And they may not entirely agree respecting the degree of strictness with which it ought to be observed. But all must acknowledge that the keeping of the Sabbath as a holy day, has been and is binding, only because God has commanded it. It is the Creator of man who appointed the Sabbath for him, and said, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

2. The text also discovers to us the time when the Sabbath was appointed. It was made for man, not for any particular nation, age, or dispensation, but for the whole race. The word *man* is generic, and can mean nothing less than the human race. But if the Sabbath was made for the race, its appointment must have been coeval with the creation of man. The Scriptures afford ample evidence that this is true.

First. It is confirmed by the obvious meaning of the inspired narrative: "Thus the

heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his works which God created and made." To bless and sanctify a day, can mean nothing but to set it apart for religious services, and to make it a day of special blessing to those who rightly observe it. Such is the uniform meaning of the terms employed; and such is the view given of the Sabbath by the prophet Isaiah: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and shalt call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own way, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own word; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father." (Isa. lviii. 13, 14.) The plain meaning of the inspired narrative, then, is, that at the time when the work

of creation was completed, and God rested from his work, he appointed the seventh day to be a religious rest, and a day of religious duty and enjoyments.

Second. This view is confirmed by the reason assigned for the sanctification of the seventh day, viz: "Because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made." The same reason is assigned in the Decalogue for keeping the Sabbath-day holy: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." Now, it is perfectly evident that the reason which God gave for sanctifying the Sabbath, is every whit as strong in favour of its sanctification at the beginning of time, as two thousand years later; and if the reason existed in all its strength immediately after the work of creation was completed, can we suppose that the sanctification was deferred for centuries afterward?

Third. That the Sabbath was instituted im-

mediately after the work of creation was completed, is further confirmed by the fact that the division of time into weeks of seven days, is distinctly traceable through the patriarchal ages, and is found amongst the traditions of the nations of antiquity. It is quite probable that this division of time is referred to, when it is stated that, "in process of time," Cain and Abel brought their offerings to the Lord. The literal translation of the language is, *at the end of days.* We discover this division of time in the days of Noah. After the return of the dove, sent out from the ark, "he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark." When the dove again returned, bearing in its mouth an olive leaf, "he stayed yet other seven days," and again sent it forth. This division of time is found amongst the traditions of all the eastern nations, and indeed amongst those of almost all nations. Now, this division is not a natural one. There is nothing in the motion of the heavenly bodies to suggest it. It is impossible, consequently, to account for the prevalence

of it, except upon the supposition of a divine appointment in the beginning of time.

Fourth. The first notice of the Sabbath, after the exode of the Jews from Egypt, is not that of an institution just then appointed, but of one already well known. In the 16th chapter of Exodus, in connection with the gathering of the manna, we read: "And it came to pass that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much, two omers for one man; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning." It is important to observe that on the sixth day of the week, the people gathered double the quantity of manna without any direction from Moses; for if he had so ordered, the rulers must have known it. Why, then, did they do this? Most manifestly, because they knew that the seventh day was the Sab-

bath, when they were to abstain from secular work. Evidently the reason why the rulers came and told Moses, was because the people had been forbidden to gather more than that which was sufficient for one day; and they were doubtful whether the day preceding the Sabbath was to be an exception to the general rule. But not a word is said leading to the conclusion that now, for the first time, the Sabbath was appointed. No explanation is given of the reasons for the appointment of such a day, or of the manner of its observance. This occurrence, therefore, affords evidence conclusive, that the Sabbath was already known as a day divinely appointed as a holy rest.

Fifth. The perpetuity and the universal obligation of the Sabbath, and consequently its appointment in the beginning of time, are distinctly indicated by the place assigned it in the Decalogue. It is acknowledged that the other nine precepts are of universal and perpetual obligation; and for this reason they were written on tables of stone by the finger of God. But why should a ceremonial institution, de-

signed for only one nation, and destined to pass away, be incorporated in a law which is obligatory on all men, and is to continue in force to the end of time? True, there is something of the nature of a positive command in it; but it is also clearly moral. All our time belongs to God. Six parts of it he allows to be devoted to ordinary pursuits and pleasures; but the seventh he retains, and requires it to be specially and exclusively devoted to spiritual duties. The obligation to employ our time, or any part of it, according to divine direction, is clearly moral. And no reason can be assigned for the placing of the command to hallow the Sabbath in the Decalogue, save that, like the other nine, it is of universal and perpetual obligation. And since the other commandments were in substance given in the beginning of time, so was the fourth.

Sixth. The reasons for the institution of the Sabbath, and the ends for which it was appointed, prove that it was not designed for one nation, for a limited period, but for all men, through all ages. Thus we are brought to consider,

3. The reasons and necessities in which the Sabbath originated.

What are the chief ends for which the Sabbath was instituted? Or in what necessities of man did it originate?

First. To begin with the first and lowest of the reasons for its appointment, it originated in the physical necessities of man. Whatever might have been the results, physically considered, if man had not fallen into sin, and thus become mortal, two truths are now abundantly established, viz:

The first is, that besides the ordinary repose in sleep, the human system requires one-seventh part of the time for rest. Six hundred and forty-one physicians signed a petition to the British parliament against opening the Crystal Palace for profit on Sundays, in which they say, "Your petitioners, from their acquaintance with the labouring classes, and with the laws which regulate the human economy, are convinced that a seventh day of rest, instituted by God, and coeval with the existence of man, is essential to the bodily health of man in ev-

ery station of life." Amongst these physicians were some who stand at the head of the profession, such as Farre, Carpenter, and others. A multitude of similar testimonies might easily be adduced; but for the purpose of the present discourse, which is only introductory to a more extended and thorough discussion of the subject, it is deemed unnecessary.

It has been further proved by experiments and testimonies the most ample and convincing, that, take one month with another, those who rest on the Sabbath, will perform more labour annually than those who devote every day to labour. The well-known philanthropist, William Wilberforce, says, "I remember that, during the war, when it was proposed to work all Sunday in one of the royal factories, for a continuance, not for an occasional service, it was found that the workmen, who obtained government consent to abstain from working on Sundays, executed, in a few months, even more work than the others." A great number of facts to the same purpose, have been collected and published by the friends of the Sabbath.

2. The chief design of the Sabbath is to meet the moral and religious necessities of mankind, that they may "glorify God and enjoy Him forever." Men possess a moral, as well as a physical and an intellectual nature; and their moral nature controls their destiny for both worlds, is their glory or their shame, and renders them a blessing or a curse to each other. It may be safely stated, as a general rule, that the true prosperity and happiness of men, even in this life, have a very marked proportion to the purity of their moral character. This great truth is even more strikingly seen in the history of families, than in that of individuals; and the history of the world demonstrates nothing more conclusively, than that "righteousness exalteth a nation." Universal experience justifies the declaration of David, that in keeping the commandments of the Lord "there is great reward."

But there can be no greater folly, than to limit one's thoughts and labours to a mere point in his endless being. We are immortal; and surely no one can doubt that his happi-

ness, a thousand years hence, will be as important to him, as his happiness at the present hour. It will be far more important, since the mind, in the indefinite expansion of all its powers and capacities, becomes constantly capable of intenser wretchedness, or of more exalted enjoyment. And no truth taught in the sacred Scriptures, more commends itself to every man's conscience and judgment, than that without holiness "no man shall see the Lord." Nor is there a single truth which receives stronger confirmation from universal experience, than that the conduct of the present forms the character for the future, and becomes a source of pleasure or of pain, of joy or of grief. It is, therefore, clear beyond a question, that all the interests of humanity are not only connected with its moral culture, but absolutely dependent upon it.

It is, then, most manifest that the immortal subjects of a perfect moral government, must have time and opportunity to become acquainted with their duties to God and to each other, and with the motives and encourage-

ments to the discharge of them. The moral affections must be moulded, and the moral conduct guided by religious and moral truth. If men are not to be the slaves of sin, they must know the truth; and the truth must make them free. (John viii. 32.) All religion, all virtue, all holiness, consists of affections moulded by God's truth, through the Holy Spirit's influence, and called into exercise by that truth. As Bacon has happily expressed the idea, "Truth prints virtue." Paul teaches the same doctrine, when he makes true religion to be obedience to the truth. (Rom. ii. 8.) But the power of truth can never be felt, nor its guiding light followed, until it is known; and it cannot become known, unless time be taken to learn it.

If it is necessary for holy beings to know the truth, that they may feel its power, and follow its light, the necessity is far greater in depraved beings. For their minds are dark, and they learn divine truth slowly. Their hearts tend powerfully in wrong directions; and all the mighty force of that gospel which is "the

power of God unto salvation," is absolutely necessary to restrain them. A radical change must be effected in them, and God's method is to "sanctify them through the truth." The great commission under which the world is to be reclaimed to God, reads, "Go teach all nations;" and if men are to be taught, there must be time to teach them, and time for them to learn.

It is necessary not only that mankind shall have time to learn their duty, but likewise that they have time to cultivate the virtues that should adorn their characters. The mere knowledge of truth is of no avail. The word of God makes its first appeal to the intellect; but it accomplishes its mission only when it reaches the heart. And it becomes the instrument of sanctification, only as it is the theme of devout meditation. Of the blessed man it is written: "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not

apply equally to all men, in all ages. If the Jews ought to have observed the Sabbath, because the work of creation was completed in six days, and the Creator rested on the seventh, ought not the Gentiles to observe it for the same reason? Have they not the same interest in the work of creation? and are they not under the same obligation gratefully and adoringly to remember their Creator? "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." If the Jews needed physical rest, and required time to learn their duties to God, to cultivate piety, to enjoy exalted pleasures, do not all these reasons apply as fully to the Gentiles? Have not these existed, in all their force, from the creation of the first man? and will they not continue in all their force to the end of time?

God gave to his people, the Jews, a civil, as well as a moral law; and he constituted the Sabbath a civil, as well as a religious institution. In one instance, at least, during the sojourning of the children of Israel in the wilder-

ness, the presumptuous violation of the law of the Sabbath was visited by the penalty of death. The fact that God made it a civil institution, indicates clearly the duty of all civil legislators, unless it can be shown that the reasons why the Jewish nation should have a Sabbath, do not apply to other nations. But as individuals and families have their respective accountability to God, so do nations. And as the civil ruler is "a minister of God," he must make his legislation conform to God's legislation. Says Blackstone, "Upon these two foundations, the law of nature and the law of revelation, depend all human laws; that is to say, no human laws should be suffered to contradict these." Now, God has commanded all men to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; no civil ruler, therefore, has the right to require his subjects to labour on that day, save in case of necessity. And since "righteousness exalteth a nation," it is the wisdom of civil rulers to protect the people, in the enjoyment of the divinely-appointed day for the cultivation of virtue. This is eminent-

ly true of a free government, since all such governments depend upon the moral forces. The Sabbath, then, originated in the moral necessities of nations, as well as of individuals and families.

II. The history of the Sabbath divides itself naturally into three periods. The first, from the beginning of time to the giving of the Law at Sinai; the second, from the giving of the Law to the introduction of the New Dispensation; the third, from the beginning of the New Dispensation to the present time.

The only history we have of the first period is extremely brief. It cannot be expected, therefore, that there would be anything more than an occasional mention of the Sabbath, together with occasional references to it. It is pleasant to think that the first day Adam and Eve spent on earth was the Sabbath; and we may well believe, that the sinless pair kept that day holy. With what pleasing wonder and religious awe they must have contemplated the beauties and sublimities of the new crea-

tion around them, and with what holy joy must they have held communion with the Creator of all things. This may have been the only Sabbath that dawned on our world before sin defiled it, and brought it under the curse. We may venture to believe, too, that after the fall, our first father and mother, taught of God, and encouraged by the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, rested from their toils on the holy day, and offered in sacrifice the animals whose skins afforded them clothing, and that it was in accordance with their example and instruction, that Cain and Abel brought their respective offerings "at the end of days." And it is not unduly straining the language of inspiration to believe that, in the days of Seth, when men "began to call on the name of the Lord," their public worship was on the day which was sanctified and blest from the beginning. Moreover, since it is certain that Noah was acquainted with the divine division of time into weeks of seven days, there is good reason to believe that he, and Enoch

before him, delighted in the observance of the holy day.

During the latter part of the sojourn of the Jews in Egypt, when they were reduced to bondage, the observance of the Sabbath must have fallen greatly into disuse; and this is probably one reason why the piety and morals of the people had sunk so low. Yet, as we have seen, the day was not forgotten; for when the manna began to fall, the people, though especially forbidden to gather more than enough for a day at a time, did on the sixth day provide themselves with double the ordinary quantity. And it is true, beyond a question, that from the day they left Egypt, guided by the mysterious pillar of cloud and fire, the rest of the Sabbath was observed.

The history of the Sabbath from the giving of the Law to the New Dispensation, exhibits three general phases:

1. There were periods, when the day was observed, in some good degree, as God designed it to be observed. And it is worthy of special remark, that the times of the faithful ob-

servance of the Sabbath, were those in which religion was in a revived and growing state. It is needless to remark that, during the sojourn in the wilderness, the day was observed with strictness. In the days of Nehemiah, after the return from the Babylonish captivity, there was a revived state of religion, and with this a higher regard for the Sabbath, both as a religious and civil institution. At an immense gathering of the people in Jerusalem, when the Scriptures had been read and expounded, for several days, to a crowd so intensely interested as to stand for hours to hear it; in a public prayer, the Levites, recounting the many and great blessings God had bestowed upon the Jews, made special mention of the holy Sabbath, as though it were one of the most precious of them all. "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, and good statutes and commandments; and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath." And they entered into a solemn covenant, that "if the people of the

land bring ware or any victuals on the Sabbath-day to sell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath, or on the holy day." And Nehemiah, discovering violations of the Sabbath in selling and buying, commanded the gates of the city to be closed on the evening before, "and charged that they should not be opened till after the Sabbath." And when those engaged in the different kinds of traffic lodged without the gate, he let them know that, if the offense were repeated, he would have them arrested.

Facts, such as these, leave us no room to doubt concerning the estimate placed upon the Sabbath, both as a religious and civil institution, by inspired men; and they demonstrate that the revival of religion manifests itself by a higher regard of the holy day, and a more conscientious observance of it. How could it be otherwise? They who take delight in the service of God, and in the ordinances of his house, must "call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable." And the true patriot, who believes in the inseparable con-

nection between the prevalence of religion and sound morals, and the peace and prosperity of nations, cannot but prize the Sabbath as a civil institution.

2. There were periods when the Sabbath was greatly profaned, or disregarded; and these were times when the standard of religion and morals was very low. And not only were those violations of the Sabbath strongly condemned by inspired men, but the overwhelming judgments of God, which came upon the church and the nation, were declared to be consequent upon the profanation of God's holy day. The prophet Jeremiah was commanded to go and stand in the gates of the city, by which the kings of Judah passed out and in, and to proclaim to them, "Thus saith the Lord. Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the Sabbath-day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the Sabbath-day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-day, as I commanded your fathers." Connected with obedience to this com-

mand, was the promise of great blessings and great prosperity; and the penalty of disobedience was announced thus: "Then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched." "But," says the prophet, "they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction." (Jer. xvii. 19–27.) Therefore divine judgments overwhelmed them. And after their return from the captivity foretold by Jeremiah, when Nehemiah saw some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses, and the like, he testified against them. And he says, "Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-day? Did not our fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." It is an important question, why so great prominence is given to the profanation

of the Sabbath, as causing those judgments which the Jewish church and nation suffered? Manifestly it is because Sabbath-breaking is a great sin, and because it results in the prevalence of all kinds of wickedness.

It is, then, most evident that those periods when the Sabbath was held most sacred, were periods when the standard of piety and morals was most elevated. There is, therefore, an inseparable connection between the strict observance of the Sabbath and the growth of piety.

3. There were periods when there prevailed a superstitious observance of the Sabbath; and these were periods when zeal for external observances had been substituted for enlightened piety. When vital piety declines amongst any people, one of three results uniformly follows, viz: some phase of gross error is embraced, or divine institutions are neglected, or a fanatical zeal for the forms of religion prevails, in the proportion that the power of religion is lost. This last was the phase of religion amongst the Jews at the advent of Christ,

and during several preceding ages. So strict were they at that period, that they would not even defend themselves when attacked on the Sabbath by their enemies. Their sufferings soon corrected this error, and then the Sabbath law was interpreted so as to allow them to defend themselves, though not to attack their enemies on the holy day. Of this last scruple Pompey, the Roman general, availed himself, whilst besieging Jerusalem. Desiring to fill up a deep ditch on the north side of the city, where his forces were much exposed to the assaults of the Jews, he had the work done on the Sabbath, meanwhile restraining his soldiers from making attack. "Nor had the Romans succeeded in their endeavours," says Josephus, "had not Pompey taken notice of the seventh day, on which the Jews abstain from all sorts of work, on a religious account, and raised his bank, but restrained his soldiers from fighting on those days; for the Jews only acted defensively on Sabbath days." It would be difficult to find a more striking illustration of the truth, that "the letter killeth."

It was in this blind zeal for the letter, and in utter ignorance of the spirit of the law, that the Pharisees accused the disciples of our Lord of profaning the Sabbath, because, whilst passing through the cornfields, they began to pluck the ears of corn. This accusation led to the declaration in the text, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath;' and the further declaration, "Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." The same fanatical zeal, in its most intense degree, induced a ruler of the synagogue to condemn him even for healing the sick on the Sabbath. "There are six days," said he, "in which men ought to work; in these, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day." His cutting reply put his accuser to shame, "Thou hypocrite, doth not each of you on the Sabbath loose his ox, or his ass, from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day?" (Luke xiii. 11–17.)

He explained the law on another occasion thus: "Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-day." (Matt. xii. 12.) The command to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy, was never designed to forbid the performance of works of necessity and of mercy. There is a wide difference between taking delight in the duties and privileges of the Sabbath, and making a merit of the rigid external observance of it. This last was the error of the Jews at the period of which we are speaking. It was the same error which led them scrupulously to tithe mint, annise, and cummin, whilst regardless of the weightier matters of the law; to wash their hands when they came from the market, whilst indulging in gross immorality.

The history of the Sabbath, from the resurrection of Christ to the present time, exhibits the following phases:

1. A change of the day to be observed, from the last day of the week to the first. There is on record no express command authorizing this change; but the example of the apostles

and primitive Christians is conclusive on the subject. For it is certain that after the resurrection of Christ, they observed the first day of the week, instead of the seventh. Paul abode at Troas seven days; "and upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow." (Acts xx. 7.) The literal rendering would be, "*on one of the Sabbaths;*" and this is the precise phraseology used by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, to signify the day on which our Lord rose from the dead. On this passage Dr. J. A. Alexander remarks, "In the case before us, it is not a simple date or chronological specification of the day on which the meeting happened to be held; for such a circumstance was too minute to be recorded for its own sake, and is never given elsewhere. The only satisfactory solution is, that the observance of the first day of the week as that of our Lord's resurrection, had already become customary, so that the assembling of the church at that time for the purpose here mentioned, was a matter of

earth, and rested on the seventh, and impressing upon them their obligations to their Creator. But it occurs on the first day of the week, thus reminding us that the Son of God died for our sins, and on the morning of the third day rose for our justification. And so, by the observance of every seventh day, and that the first day of the week, as the holy Sabbath, the two great events in the history of our world are constantly brought to view, namely, its creation, and its redemption; and at the same time the minds of men are turned both to the law of God, and to the Gospel of Christ. For by creation, man was placed under the perfect law of God, "holy, just, and good;" and by redemption he is placed under "the grace of God that bringeth salvation."

And might it not reasonably have been expected, that the completion of the work of redemption would be celebrated by a Sabbath, since it is a greater work than that of creation, and more exalts the glory of God? The work of creation was a means; the work of redemption is the glorious end. This world was cre-

ated, that it might be the theatre on which God would display the glories of his grace, by the redemption of the church of Christ. Dr. Dwight was right, therefore, in supposing that in the following sublime prophecy, it was intended to be understood that the work of redemption should, so to speak, eclipse the work of creation; and that the Sabbath should commemorate the former, rather than the latter: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad, and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." (Isaiah lxv. 17, 18.)

2. The history of the Sabbath, from the introduction of the New Dispensation to the present time, embraces three periods, each presenting its own peculiar phases.

1. The first period embraces the three first centuries of the Christian era. During this period, the Sabbath was observed with a good degree of strictness, as a day of religious instruction and worship. One is surprised, in

reading our ecclesiastical histories, to observe how little attention this vital subject has received at the hands of the writers. Rev. James Gilfellan has gathered up abundant testimonies from the Christian fathers on this subject. Those who are interested in the history of the Sabbath, would do well to consult his work. The early Christians, he informs us, called the Sabbath "the first of days, the chief of days, a day of gladness. They honoured it by standing in prayer, and by not fasting. They rose early, and sat late, that they might redeem their holy time."

2. With the growing corruption of religion, between the third and sixteenth centuries, the Sabbath came gradually to be associated with the saints' days, and was degraded, as now in countries where Romanism prevails, to a holiday —a day, after the morning religious service, of frolic and dissipation. No one would expect to find, during the dark ages, the scriptural observance of the Lord's day. Yet, wherever the of cnel was preached in its purity, there the tion is\th was strictly observed. Louis XII,

King of France, sent men to inquire respecting the truth of the accusations against the Waldenses of Provence, who reported, amongst other things, that they carefully observed the Sabbath.

3. Unhappily for the cause of religion, the reformers, Luther and Calvin, seem not to have admitted the identity of the Lord's day with the original Sabbath, and to have observed the former rather as a matter of necessity, or expediency, than as divinely commanded. Calvin says, "Now whereas it was expedient for the destruction of superstition, that the day which the Jews kept holy was abolished; and it being necessary for the preservation of decorum, order, and peace, in the Christian church, another day was appointed for the same use;" and so important did he regard the religious observance of the Lord's day, that he said "if it were abolished, the church would be in imminent danger of immediate convulsion and ruin. The ancients," he adds, "have not without sufficient reason substituted what we call the Lord's day, in the room

of the Sabbath. For since the resurrection of the Lord is the end and consummation of that true rest, which was adumbrated by the ancient Sabbath; the same day which put an end to the shadows, admonishes Christians not to adhere to a shadowy ceremony. Yet I do not lay so much stress on the septenary number, that I would oblige the church to an invariable adherence to it." These lax and unscriptural views of the Sabbath, go far toward accounting for the sad decay of vital piety on the Continent. For it is vain to hope for any profitable observance of the Lord's day, if it be admitted that its appointment is not of divine authority.

4. In Great Britain and the United States, more Scriptural views of the Sabbath have prevailed; and the effects are visible in the higher standard of vital piety in the churches, and of morals amongst the people. The controversy on this subject which, from time to time, prevailed in England, is interesting and instructive. Through the entire history of it, there will be found to have been a most inti-

mate connection between the standard piety in the churches, and their appreciation of the Sabbath, as a day divinely appointed to be kept holy; and a connection no less intimate between a public regard for the fourth commandment, and for the other nine commandments of the Decalogue. For example, it was in the reign of Charles I, that, under the influence of Archbishop Laud, the King republished the Declaration of James I, "concerning lawful sports to be used on Sundays after divine service." At that time, "the court had their balls, masquerades, and plays, on the Sunday evenings, while the youth of the country were at their morrice-dances, May-games, church and clerk ales, and all such kinds of revelling."—*Neal.* No careful reader of English history needs to be told what was the standard of piety in the established church, when conscientious ministers were suspended from the functions of their office, for refusing to read in their churches the King's proclamation in favour of the profanation of the Sabbath; nor can we wonder at the civil dis-

orders which soon followed this state of things.

5. From the days of Constantine to the present time, the civil authorities in Christian nations have regarded the Sabbath as important as a civil institution, and have enacted laws for its protection. The civil legislation has very generally been but the expression of the public sentiment of the churches and the people. Consequently, in those ages when, and in those countries where the gospel has been preached in greatest purity, and the standard of morals has been highest, the civil legislation has afforded the highest degree of protection to the Sabbath. In no nations on the earth, has the Sabbath been so generally observed and protected, as in Great Britain and the United States; and in no others has the standard of morals been so elevated. It is greatly to be lamented, however, that in this important department of morals, our country has of late exhibited a downward tendency; and how far our present troubles are the consequence of this deterioration, it may be difficult to decide.

The history of the Sabbath amply justifies the following conclusions:

1. In every age, the connection has been most intimate between sound faith and elevated piety, and the strict observance of the Sabbath; and the connection has been as close between public morals, and public respect for that holy day. It would be impossible, I believe, to point to a single period of any considerable length, that can be justly regarded as forming an exception to the general statement. And if this be true, then it is a truth which ought to be deeply impressed on the mind of every Christian, and of every patriot; for it demonstrates the importance of the Sabbath to all the dearest interests of the human race.

2. Whenever and wherever the Sabbath, instead of being kept holy, has become a holiday, it has become a source of dissipation and corruption. It is a universal rule, that the more important and valuable any institution is, the greater the evils of its perversion. We have only to go to Spain, Mexico, and South America, to see the effect of such a perver-

sion of the Sabbath upon public morals. After morning service, the masses of the people resort to the bull-fight, the cock-pit, the theatre, and the like; and no day in the week is so fruitful of vice. If, then, we would not have the Sabbath become a curse, let us insist upon the strict observance of the entire day. Better that it should be a day of secular labour, than of frolic and dissipation.

3. The two classes of men who have opposed the strict observance of the Sabbath, and have opposed the protection of it by civil legislation, have been errorists who, rejecting the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, have thus undermined its morals, and irreligious men. Some, indeed, there have been, whose published creeds were not fundamentally unsound, who have trampled upon the Sabbath, but they have been men whose lives demonstrated how little regard they had for the doctrines they had not publicly renounced. As a general rule, it is true, that the worst men have ever been the bitterest enemies of the Sabbath; the best men, its most earnest defenders.

4. Neither the church of Christ, nor any nation, can spare the Sabbath. The language of Calvin is not too strong, when he says, that without it "the church would be in imminent danger of immediate convulsion and ruin." And if the Church cannot live without the Sabbath, neither could any free nation survive its overthrow. We must have the Sabbath, or we must have despotism or anarchy.

THE

AUTHORITY AND PERPETUITY

OF THE

Christian Sabbath.

BY THE

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The Authority and Perpetuity of the Christian Sabbath.

"THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN."—*Mark* ii. 27.

THIS testimony from the lips of Jesus sets the seal of our Messiah's sanction upon the observance of the Sabbath as a divine institution. He declares that it "was *made;*" that it was made, not for a particular nation, but "for man;" appointed by the authority of God to meet the needs of universal humanity.

What our Lord thus declares to have been made for man, He did not design in any way to unmake or impair. He proclaimed himself the Lord of the Sabbath, and stood forth its appointed guardian and vindicator, rescuing it alike from the desecrations of impiety and the perversions of time-honoured superstition. When He uttered this remarkable saying which I have here repeated, He was addressing an audience who had been taught by rabbin-

ical traditions to "make void" the original law by useless exactions; to regard the merely ritual observance of the day, as a "chief end" to which every spiritual interest was to be subordinated. Even "works of necessity and mercy" were rigidly avoided, and the miracles of Jesus were placed upon a level with those needless labours that were prompted by lawless greed.

As on that sacred day, for instance, He allowed his disciples to pluck some ears of corn, in order to satisfy the cravings of hunger, they accused Him of profaning the Sabbath; when He healed a poor cripple by the power of his word, and bade the man to bear away the bed, or mat, on which he lay, they captiously pronounced him a contemner of the law of Moses.

In answer to accusations like these, Jesus set forth the law of the Sabbath in its enduring relations, and its proper dignity, as a means to a great moral and religious end. He declared that "the Sabbath was made for man;" it was ordained originally by Him who made man,

who knew man's nature and wants, who had respect to his physical and spiritual welfare throughout the whole range of his being, whether he be regarded as a creature of time, or as an heir of immortality.

The phraseology which our Lord has here employed, brings the Sabbath into view, not only as a boon conferred upon man for his own benefit, seeking his acceptance on account of its good effects, but also in the light of a divinely-set observance obligatory on the conscience. It dignifies the Sabbath as an institution, not designed for the Jews alone, but for man universally; as an institution demanded by the permanent needs of our common nature, and revealed to us in the form of a LAW, emanating from the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

It is evident, at a glance, that an institution, having so good an aim, whose existence, (as has been shown in a previous lecture,) can be traced back to the early twilight of human history, must be in many ways intimately connected with the fortunes of our race

Aided by the light of these preliminary views, we are the better prepared for the consideration of these two connected propositions.

I. The Sabbatical law is a divine law, of perpetual and universal obligation.

II. The foundations upon which this law rests, are deeply and permanently laid in the constitution and course of Nature.

In setting forth the grounds of this first statement, we observe, first of all, that the LAW of the Sabbath is recorded in the Fourth Commandment of the decalogue. Its position there is significant of a great principle. It was not placed by Moses in the ceremonial code of transient rites, but was engraven by the power of God upon the tables of stone, as an expression of its *perpetuity*. Thus it was made, by supreme authority, to take rank at once with those divine enactments, that men were taught to regard as universally obligatory and "enduring forever."

What, then, we naturally ask, in this connection, is the meaning, what the scope, of

that chief requirement which distinguishes the Fourth Commandment?

It is this: that a *seventh portion* of time shall be hallowed; that is, set apart, consecrated to the worship of God.

The Fourth Commandment, let it be observed, is particularly remarkable on account of its *generic* character, by which it was made susceptible of adjustment to the demands of the Mosaic and the Christian dispensations of religion. It does not fix the Sabbath on a set day of the week, as determined by this or that system of chronology, or mode of reckoning; it marks out *relative*, not absolute time. It says to us, "Six days shalt thou labour—the seventh is the Sabbath."

After six days of toil comes the day of rest: this is the law. But the Sabbath law itself does not designate the ERA from which the reckoning of the week shall commence; it leaves that to be learned from other sources of information. This structure of its phraseology was not accidental, but was designed, as the history of the Sabbath indicates, to impart to

the law a susceptibility of adaptation to the new as well as to the old economy.

Let us look at this position a little more closely.

The commandments given by Moses did not originate a new institution. It pointed to the past. Its first announcement is, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." It received the Sabbath as a legacy of patriarchal times, invested it with new sanctions, established its observance upon new foundations.

Its relation to the Mosaic code was somewhat analogous to that which our Lord pointed out, in regard to the Abrahamic rite of circumcision, when He said to the Jews, (John vii. 22, 23,) "Moses gave unto you circumcision; not because it is of Moses, but of THE FATHERS; and ye, on the Sabbath day, circumcise a man, that the Law of Moses should not be broken;" we see, therefore, that the Jewish Lawgiver received this institute from the patriarchal age, and made the command, for its perpetual observance, a part of the religious system that he established.

It was thus in relation to the Sabbath which was instituted in paradise; was coeval with man's creation, was set apart for him and hallowed by him while in a state of innocence; after the fall, became the set token of a covenant of mercy between him and his Creator; and then, in due time, by the divine legation of Moses, was established anew as an ordinance of heaven to be observed on earth throughout all generations.

And let it not be forgotten that, in accordance with this view, the history of the Sabbath furnishes an array of corroborative facts.

The regular observance of religious worship in the family of Adam, the custom of offering sacrifices at certain periods, designated "the end of the days;" the reckoning of time by WEEKS throughout the patriarchal age; the idea of sacredness universally associated with the number *seven*, the radical sense of the Hebrew term indicating that number as expressive of *fullness* and *sufficiency*, and the devout regard which was paid to the seventh day by the ancient Phœnicians, Egyptians, Assyrians,

Chinese, Arabs, by the Brahmins of India, and the Druids of Britain, by the majority of Gentile nations, whether civilized or barbarians, present a combination of facts which we can not adequately explain, except by assigning to the narrative of Moses that plain and simple sense that we have here set forth, and which traces the institution of the Sabbath to the land of Eden, to the era of man's creation.

In this connection it is worthy of remembrance, that the celebrated Laplace, in his Exposition of the System of the World, speaking of the week as an admeasurement of time, whose "origin is lost in the most remote antiquity," adds the remark that "it circulates through ages, mixing itself with the kalendars of different races. The week is, perhaps, the most ancient and incontestible monument of human knowledge; it appears to point out a common source whence that knowledge proceeded."*

Assured that this plain interpretation of the

*Œuvres de Laplace, tome sexieme, Paris 1840, Exposition du Systemo du Monde, page 20, livre premier. Quoted by Baylee, p. 22.

testimony of Moses is sustained by ample proofs, let us pursue our inquiry as to the sense and scope of the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue.

We have said that the terms of the law set the day for observing the Sabbath but *relatively;* determining only the *proportion* of time to be consecrated to the purposes of worship.

Now, at this point, let it be observed that the Mosaic narrative of the giving of the law, unfolds one great principle which shines forth as a guiding light over the whole course of our investigation: that is, *the capacity of the original Sabbatical institution to adjust itself to the changing conditions of our race in successive epochs.*

That principle is disclosed by a comparison of the different objects of commemoration, which were announced to the Israelites by the first and second promulgations of the Decalogue. The first promulgation of the Fourth Commandment is recorded in the twentieth chapter of the Book of Exodus; and there the

Sabbath is represented as being commemorative simply of the work of creation. It expresses the one fundamental idea, which distinguishes revealed religion from all the Pagan systems of Nature-worship; that is the idea of God as Creator. The second pomulgation of the law is recorded in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy; and there the work of creation is not mentioned; but the national emancipation from the bondage of Egypt is put forth as the

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ical era, which was brought within the scope of the Sabbatical law by an authorized annexation; if that leading event of the time called forth new associations of religious ideas that were made to cluster around the ancient institute, then, surely, there was furnished a ground of *expectation* that, when the greater redemption wrought by the predicted Messiah should have been accomplished, *this*, too, would be taken into the keeping of the Sabbath-law, and would be held forth before the world as an epoch of Sabbatical commemoration by "the generations to come."

And here let it be observed in passing, that for us to say, as some have said, that the second enactment here referred to, making the emancipation from Egyptian bondage an object of Sabbatical commemoration, places the Sabbath itself on a level with institutes that were merely national, local, and temporary, would be adopting a view that overlooks or forgets a grand, leading feature of the Mosaic dispensation of religion, namely, its subordination as a chosen means to the uplifting and renovation

of universal humanity, "in the fullness of time." For the chief promise of the Abrahamic covenant, was the promise of a Messiah for all the nations and families of the earth; and nothing in that nation's history had any permanent worth, except in its ministry, to that comprehensive design.

A recognition of this truth pervades all the psalms and prophecies, imparts to them an unquenchable vitality, and renders them the treasured heritage of the world forever. This is the living fire that glows in the poetry of the Old Testament, and flames in all those significant quotations which irradiate the pages of the gospel. On this account, every defeat of Israel was bewailed as a calamity to mankind, and every victory was celebrated as a triumph for the cause of the human race for all ages; like those, for instance, immortalized in the strains of the forty-ninth and sixty-sixth psalms, that send abroad an appeal to the sympathies of every human being in the world, "O clap your hands all ye peoples; make a joyful noise unto God all ye lands; make his

praise glorious; all the earth shall worship thee and sing unto thy name." Be assured, the exodus of Israel from Egypt is as fitting a theme of praise for us, and will be for all that shall come after us, as it was for those minstrels who joined Miriam to chant the triumphal anthem over Pharaoh and his hosts, when they sank like lead in the deeps of the Red Sea.

From these views of the Sabbath law, suggested by the Old Testament, we derive an adequate reason for that arrangement, which ranks the Fourth Commandment with moral precepts that bear upon them the impress of permanence and universality.

Surely it is not to be supposed that He, who assigned to it the place which it occupies on the table of stone, failed to recognize the proper distinction between the positive and the moral, between the transient and the permanent, in the realm of religion. With an emphasis of meaning is this distinction marked in the statement of Moses touching the Decalogue: (Deut. v: 22.) "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount

out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and He *added no more:* and He wrote them in two tables of stones and delivered them unto me." Could He have written in the enduring Decalogue, by a sort of inadvertence, a precept pertaining to the ceremonial code of Jewish worship? No. Although the obligation to observe the Sabbath as a perpetual law, might not be discerned at once by intuition, or unaided reason, like the obligation of veracity, or honesty, yet the all-wise Lawgiver founded the Sabbatical institution upon those broad, deep, immutable principles which are peculiar to no age or clime, which no progress of humanity can ever render obsolete, but which lie at the basis of all moral order, and are essential elements in the constitution of the universe.

But now, in this connection, to the view of many an inquirer, an important question will present itself. If it be true that the Sabatical law takes rank with moral precepts of perpetual obligation; if the scope of the law

was modified under the old dispensation, so as to adjust it to the progressive needs of the people; and if the Fourth Commandment determine not *absolute* time, but only the *proportion* of time to be set apart for the Sabbath observance, by what method shall we, who live under the Christian dispensation, under the reign of the Messiah, ascertain the day of the week whereon the Sabbath should be kept?

The true answer is devious. The method is the same for us as it was for ancient Israel: namely, to observe the indications which God has given us in his Word, as to his will relating to the *era* from which our reckoning of Sabbatical days should be commenced.

For us, who live in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, if any such indications are to be sought, they must be sought, of course, in the ministry of the Messiah—in the teachings and precedents of the New Testament.

And before directing our minds to the search after such indications, it may be well to remember that Messianic prophecy, a thousand

years before our Lord's advent, held forth this grand idea as a guiding light for us: that the resurrection of Christ should be the distinguished *era* of subsequent history. It was an inspired proclamation, chanted for centuries in Hebrew worship: "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Psalm cxviii. 22–24. These words of the old prophetic chant are quoted by our Lord, in his last discourse delivered in the Jewish temple, as referring directly to himself; (Matt. xxi. 42) and they are declared, by the apostle Peter, (Acts iv. 10, 11) to have been fulfilled by the resurrection of Jesus. These collated testimonies, then, furnish the most direct proof that the resurrection-day was to be regarded as an era that God had made for the coming ages, and show us the way whereby the Divine Spirit prepared the first disciples to hail the resurrection of Jesus as the chief era of human history, to hallow and honour it by

bringing it, as an object of perpetual remembrance, within the scope of Sabbatic, weekly celebration. Follow out this suggestion, I pray you, a step or two, at least, in the line of direction whither it leads us.

Mark, first of all, this fact: on the sixth day of the week our Lord was crucified. On the seventh day he was in the sepulchre. "The Shepherd had been smitten—the sheep were scattered." The Christian church had no festival on that day. It was a day of grief and gloom, as if the sun had been stricken from the firmament.

But on the first day of the week the Messiah arose from the dead, the Lord of a new spiritual creation. The Sun of Righteousness broke forth in celestial splendour, and dispelled the clouds that had quenched every ray of hope or joy. No day like that had ever dawned upon the world. "If Christ had not risen," his followers would have been "of all men most miserable," and even creation itself would not have called forth from them another song of thanksgiving. That day, of course, was

worthy to take the precedence of all other days, having been signalized by an event more wonderful, more sublime and momentous, than any other recorded in the annals of the world's history.

On that day Jesus met his desponding followers, made himself known to them at different times while separated from each other, and then, at its close, miraculously entered the place where they were assembled. That was a memorable and joyous meeting of the first Christian church under the reign of the risen Messiah; and from that day to this, the Resurrection-day has been hallowed to services of social worship, by the example of Him who taught that "the Sabbath was made for man," and that He was *Himself* "the Lord of the Sabbath."

For, observe still further, Jesus was never seen again in the temple, or the synagogue, never met with the Jews again on *their* Sabbath, never by any known act distinguished or noticed the seventh day. But on the first day of the following week, the disciples having

been gathered in the appointed place of assembling, the doors being shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus reappears, stands forth in the midst of them, and gives them his benediction.

Then from the last desponding doubter he received the acknowledgment of his Messiahship, and of his supreme authority, in that devout exclamation of Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

From that day onward, evermore, the resurrection of Jesus was celebrated weekly by his followers, as the signal event of the *Christian era;* and at the close of the first century, the last of the Apostles, in his message from the isle of Patmos, applied to that day a common and popular phrase, "The Lord's day," as a proper designation. Thus he set it forth as the day of which the Prophet had sung, of which the Old Church had chanted, of which Jesus had spoken, "the day that the Lord had made," wherein to "rejoice and be glad," fulfilling all the ends of "the Sabbath made for man," and sanctioned with authority by "the Son of Man, the Lord of the Sabbath."

And now, having illustrated our proposition, relating to the permanent and universal obligation of the Sabbath law; having availed ourselves of the light beaming forth from that great principle unfolded in the Old and New Testaments, namely, the capacity of the Sabbatical institution to adjust itself to different epochs, the successive dispensations of religion, we are prepared to sustain our second proposition.

The foundations upon which the Sabbatical law rests, are deeply and permanently laid in the constitution and course of nature.

A clear view of this is adapted to enlarge our conceptions, and strengthen our convictions of the divine authority, that invests and sustains the institution of the Sabbath.

1. Hence, we observe, that the Sabbatical institution is founded upon permanent principles, pertaining to the physical constitution of man.

Why so? Let us see. The alternation of day and night indicates that the principle of REST, as well as of action, is a part of that divinely-constituted system under which we

live. "The sun knoweth his going down," says the Psalmist; "God maketh darkness, and it is night."

> "Night's silent reign hath robbed the world of light,
> To lend in lieu a greater benefit,
> Repose and sleep; when every mortal breast,
> Whom care and grief permit, may take their rest."

All men readily apprehend this law of nature; yet all men do not obey it; for, amid the exciting pursuits of life, it has often been disregarded. This practical mistake has sometimes been made by men, of whom, on account of their general knowledge, it would have been least expected. Signally illustrative of this remark, is the case of Sir Humphrey Davy, who was suddenly arrested in his brilliant professional career by a nervous disease, which caused a long cessation from those labours which were attracting the attention of England. Paris, in his life of Davy, calls this "an awful pause in his researches." Davy ascribed his illness to contagion caught in experimenting on the fumigation of hospitals. On this his biographer remarks: "upon conversing with

Dr. Babington, who, with Dr. Frank, attended Davy throughout this illness, he assured me that there was not the slightest ground for this opinion, and that the fever was evidently the effect of fatigue and an over-excited brain." The truth was, that this earnest labourer in the cause of science, borne along by a mighty impetus, had continued his exertions both by day and night, and, having violated the law of *diurnal* rest, was incapable of averting the fearful penalty.

A celebrated physician and writer, Dr. Andrew Combe, of Edinburgh, having cited the case of Davy, thus proceeds to observe, touching this law of diurnal rest; "Nervous disease from excessive mental labour, and exaltation of feeling, sometimes shows itself in another form. From neglecting proper intervals of rest, the vascular excitement of the brain, which always accompanies activity of mind, has never time to subside, and a restless irritability of temper and disposition comes on, attended with sleeplessness and anxiety, for which no external cause can be assigned. The

symptoms gradually become aggravated, the digestive functions give way, nutrition is impaired, and a sense of wretchedness is constantly present, which often leads to attempts at suicide. While all this is going on, however, the patient will talk, or transact business, with perfect propriety and accuracy, and no stranger could tell that anything ails him. But in his intercourse with his intimate friends, or physician, the havoc made upon the mind becomes apparent; and, if not speedily arrested, it soon terminates, according to the constitution or circumstances of the individual case, in derangement, palsy, apoplexy, fever, suicide, or permanent weakness."

Now, while it is evident to all that a *diurnal* rest is a law of nature, it is equally true, though not so obvious at once to all, that a *seventh-day* rest is also a law of nature, as well as a command of the Decalogue.

This conclusion rests upon a careful induction of facts. A comparison of facts, derived from a wide field of observation, has disclosed to the view of scientific inquirers the broad

principle, that the Sabbath law is founded deeply in the constitution and course of nature. One of the grounds of this doctrine was well indicated by an "acute and experienced physician," Dr. Farre, of London, in his testimony before a Committee of the British House of Commons. That Committee was appointed in the year 1832, in order to investigate the effects of labouring seven days in a week, compared with those labouring six, and resting one. Dr. Farre, who had been an active medical practitioner between thirty and forty years, and who had for a long period been connected with a public medical institution, thus stated the results of his observations. "As a day of rest, I view it as a day of *compensation* for the inadequate *restorative* power of the body under continued labour and excitement. A physician always has respect to the preservation of the restorative power; because if this once be lost, his healing office is at an end. A physician is anxious to preserve the *balance of circulation*, as necessary to the restorative power of the body. The ordinary exertions of

man *run down* the circulation every day of his life; and the first general law of nature, by which God prevents man from destroying himself, is the alternating of day and night, that repose may succeed action. But although the night apparently equalizes the circulation, yet it does not restore the balance sufficiently for the attainment of a long and active life. Hence one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect by its repose the animal system. I consider, therefore, that in the bountiful provision of Providence for the preservation of human life, the Sabbatical appointment is not (as it has sometimes been theologically viewed) simply a precept, partaking of the nature of a political institution; but that its observance is to be numbered amongst the natural duties, if the preservation of life be admitted to be a duty, and the premature destruction of it a suicidal act."

These statements, from a source so highly respectable, made a strong impression on the minds of multitudes at the time they were

published, both in Great Britain and in America. They awakened in different directions an earnest spirit of inquiry. The New Haven Medical Association made them the subjects of their special discussion, and unanimously reaffirmed them. Fresh experiments were instituted, and the conviction gained ground more widely, that a seventh-day rest is demanded by all labouring animals. For example: "A gentleman in Vermont, who was in the habit of driving his horses twelve miles a day seven days in a week, afterwards changed his practice, and drove them but six days, allowing them to rest one. He then found that, with the same keeping, he could drive them fifteen miles a day, and preserve them in as good order as before. So that a man may rest on the Sabbath, and let his horses rest, yet promote the benefit of both and be in all respects the gainer." The same conclusion has forced itself upon the attention of different classes of manufacturing companies, as being the true law of labour for men, whether their exertions be chiefly muscular or mental, and as being

equally applicable to all regularly working animals.

From scenes of peaceful agriculture, from the busy marts of trade, from the forge, the shop, the factory, from the laboratories of science, from the ships that plough the Pacific on voyages that occupy successive years, and even from the plantations of the South, where the capacity of the slave for labour is calculated with mathematical exactness, the voices of earnest men have been heard, attesting the truth that the Sabbatical law pervades the whole realm of active life, that it bears upon it the impress of a universal fitness to the physical constitution of man, and that it will ultimately avenge itself on every community, that upholds its violation or trifles with its sanctions.

2. Guided by the light of these truths, we need not much to tax the time or thought of any one to show, secondly, that the Sabbath law is sustained by the essential principles of man's moral constitution, and is demanded by its necessities.

For, although man was made for toil, and must earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, he "can not live by bread alone;" his spirit transcends the narrow bounds of sensual enjoyments, soars above the sphere of material things, and sighs amid the drudgery of life for converse with a higher realm, for the light, air, and aliment, congenial with its immortal nature. Endowed with the power of discerning the distinction between right and wrong, the beauty of truth and goodness, of aspiring after what is noble, lovely, and enduring, of becoming, by sympathy, a partaker of God's happiness, (or, as the Hebraistic phrase has it, "of entering into his rest,") it often longs to rise, as on eagles' wings, above the din of earthly cares, to cleanse itself from the dust and grime contracted in the routine of secular pursuits, that thus it may obtain broader views of its relations to God's universe at large, and be made ready for the destinations that beckon it onward to a nobler state of being.

The limits of this service forbid that I should linger here, to delineate the methods by

which the Sabbath meets the call of this urgent need. Suffice it to say, that "the Lord of the Sabbath" has given to mankind those ordinances, which were designed to call off our thoughts from the material and transient to the spiritual and permanent, to fix attention on truths the most momentous, and to keep the mind well balanced and firmly poised amid the excitements and temptations of this fleeting world.

It has been well said by an eminent writer, that the soul of man is elevated by whatsoever emancipates him from the despotism of the present, and leads him to open his ear to the lessons of the past; and it has been well said, also, that man is ennobled by every effort to anticipate "things to come," and, by a wise forecast, to subjugate the present hour to the attainment of future good. In relation to these purposes, literature, science, art, history, philosophy, poetry, all human culture, may do something; but nothing can accomplish a result so grand, by means so simple, as the teachings of revealed religion. Every suscep-

tibility of the soul may be touched, every faculty quickened, and the whole man lifted to a higher sphere of thought and feeling.

But the best medicines when abused become poison; and the greatest blessings, when perverted, become the heaviest curses; so the Sabbath, when desecrated, may become the means of the rankest demoralization in its effects upon an individual or a community. In order that the Sabbath accomplish its beneficent aims, it must be used in accordance with its high *moral* ends. If it be made a day of idleness and dissipation, it yields effective ministry to lawless passion, and whets the edge of every debasing appetite. Nations that do not recognize the obligations of the Sabbath law, lose all the moral benefits that might otherwise be reaped from intellectual culture, science, and refinement. Behold, for instance, the marked contrast between two peoples, which published statistics have forced upon our attention. In Scotland, the highest tone of morality is found among the educated classes; in France, the highest tone of morality is to

be found among the uneducated classes. In Scotland, crimes are the most numerous in districts where there is the most of ignorance; in France, crimes abound in proportion to the spread of scholastic knowledge. This amazing fact has been the subject of remark by both British and French writers, and especially by Bulwer, in his work on France, published in the reign of Louis Phillippe.

And what is the great lesson which this fact reveals? Evidently this: that knowledge can not improve the moral condition of a people, unless the conscience and the heart be educated by Christianity. And as we know, too, that where there is no regard to the Sabbath, there is no vital Christianity, we are taught by the progressive history of humanity, that the foundations of the Sabbath law are laid in the Constitution and course of nature.

If these things be so, if these be true principles capable of enduring the strictest scrutiny, let us resolve that our plans of life and our conduct shall be conformed to them; and let us favour every effort to commend them to the

acceptance of the community. At this time, especially, does the Sabbath put forth its claim to our regard, with a more than ordinary emphasis of meaning. For never, more than now, has the attention of the world been occupied with the question, whether it be possible for a free people, without a political alliance of the throne and the altar, to maintain a form of constitutional self-government. In vain does the inquirer look abroad over the old continents for the realization of such an idea, in the history of a first-class power among the nations. And when he directs his eyes to this New World, and hails the exemplification of it which our fathers transmitted to us, he is forced to the conclusion that this idea never has been realized, and never can be realized, except by a Sabbath-keeping people. He sees the profound significance of a testimony borne by a distinguished Frenchman, in a Report on Sabbath observance to the French Parliament of 1850. "Witness that city London, the capital and focus of the commerce of the world, where Sunday is observed with the

most scrupulous care, and where two and a half millions of people are kept in order by three battalions of infantry and some troops of guards, while Paris requires the presence of 50,000 men."

But it may be asked, how many battalions does New York require to keep the public peace? The answer is "our glory and our joy;" and when we say "not one," "the community is self-governed," we know that the reason of this distinction is the fact, that we have grown up from infancy a comparatively Sabbath-keeping people. Join with me in the prayer, God help us to be true to this trust, and save us from the folly of those who would tempt us by baits of sensual gratification, to sell, like Esau, a sacred birthright.

THE

DUTIES OF THE SABBATH,

BY THE

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PASTOR OF THE TWENTY-THIRD STREET REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH.

The Duties of the Sabbath.

"Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it."—*Exodus* xx. 8–11.

The first two discourses of this series have established the divine origin and permanent authority of the Sabbath. It is important for us to keep these conclusions in mind, as we proceed to-night, to inquire how the Sabbath is to be kept. All obligation is defined by law; and it will appear, accordingly, that those loose views concerning the observance of the Sabbath, which good men have held in Reformation times, or in our own, have grown out of the notion that the Fourth Commandment was a part of that Jewish economy, which the coming in of a better covenant has abrogated. We, upon the other hand, have

found every reason for leaving that command where God has placed it—among those fundamental moral precepts which constitute the permanent and universal law of our race. These reasons have been amply stated, and do not need to be reviewed. Yet let me say, that even a very imperfect exposition of the law of the Sabbath cannot fail to add something to the evidence of its permanent authority.

At our first view of the Sabbatic law, we are struck with its brevity and lack of detail. It would be natural to regret this feature of it, and to think that fuller legislation upon this subject would have forestalled many mischievous disputes, and have saved tender consciences from distressing doubts. But a moment's reflection will show us, that any minute scriptural statement of Sabbath duties was by no means to be expected. For it is evident that those duties must vary with the varying relations of those who are to perform them. A perfect Sabbath for a Jew would not be a perfect Sabbath for a Christian. The acts that might become a newly converted Caffre on

that day, would not satisfy the conscience of an intelligent Christian in England or America. The child's Sabbath duties must differ materially from those of his parent. Even the lapse of time, increasing as it does the scope of Christian knowledge, and sympathy, and action, must greatly modify the employments of the holy day. Thus our own Sabbaths embody special forms of well-doing, of which even our grandparents could hardly have conceived; and the Sabbaths of the millennium, again, shall differ widely from our own. So evident is it that a rigid routine of Sabbath acts could not be prescribed even in an inspired book. The most that we could fairly look for, would be the announcement of such general principles of Sabbath duty, as shall be of easy and universal application. Such principles, I think, are embodied in the law which we are to consider to-night.

I propose first to explain the general scope of that law; and then to detail some of the duties which it imposes upon us.

I. The design of the Fourth Commandment

is evidently twofold. In part it is a prohibition of labour on the seventh day. "In it thou shalt not do any work." The law is clear, and has never been revoked. On the other hand, experience has taught us that the need of a weekly rest is lodged in our physical constitution. So far, then, as the law of the Sabbath enjoins such rest, it stands upon the same footing with those other precepts of the decalogue, which forbid theft, or murder, or other acts that offer injury to individuals or society. Our Saviour, accordingly, did not intend to set this necessary law aside, when he relieved it of the rigid and mischievous construction which the Jews had put upon it. We know that they refused to defend themselves against their enemies on the Sabbath, and counted our Redeemer to have profaned the day by the performance even of his most merciful miracles. But Christ taught them that "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day:" and it is easy to see that the spirit of the commandment was kept by him, and not by them. The natural law which devotes the

night to repose, is as formal and intelligible as the express law of the Sabbath; and yet no man considers that that law of nature forbids him to rise from his bed to direct a traveller, or to watch the whole night with the sick or dying. Just so the Christian church loses none of its reverence for the Fourth Commandment, when it learns from the precepts and example of our Saviour, that the hours of the Sabbath may be most appropriately spent in acts of necessity and mercy.

But the Sabbath law is more than a mere prohibition of labour. The command is positive: "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy;" and this command in enforced by the fact that "God blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it." We claim that these expressions are intended to dedicate the day to the highest religious and spiritual uses. And we argue

First, from the terms themselves. In the original, the expressions "keep holy" and "hallow" are the same. The word that is so translated, is constantly employed to indicate those acts,

whether of God, or of men under his appointment, by which priests, or vestments, or altars, or sacrifices, were said to be sanctified. Now it is easy to understand what is involved in sanctifying or making holy a priest, or his official clothing, or an altar, or a victim. And the sanctifying of a day; what shall that be but its consecration to the same sacred use, to which all the rest are given? namely, to God's worship.

This conclusion is confirmed by the fact, that keeping the Sabbath is made, both in the law itself and elsewhere, a duty to God. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, I am the Lord." "Ye shall reverence my Sabbaths." We k[illegible] God calls it "my holy day." Inselves against th[illegible]osition of the command in the and counted our Red[illegible]logue, proves that God is the day by the performance ev[illegible]t enjoins. And merciful miracles. But Christ[illegible]nmands of that that "it is lawful to do good on[illegible]meaning, fairly day:" and it is easy to see that[illegible]aw all the sig- the commandment was kept by naturally bear. by them. The natural law whic[illegible] there are, in-

deed, but two positive statutes in all the decalogue, one in each table. Neither of these opposes itself in detailed terms to the sins which the other commandments forbid; and yet each of them has within itself the spirit and germ of a universal duty. The commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother," begins the second table, by establishing in filial reverence and domestic law the corner-stone of all social virtue. The first table closes with the law of the Sabbath, which, by recalling men from worldly engagements to the frequent and thoughtful worship of God, lays the deeper and broader foundations of all duty, both toward God himself and toward society. The two commandments stand in the midst of the decalogue, articulated together, the living rock by which the whole is stable. Elsewhere, in a less formal but more detailed exhibition of duty, these two commands are bound into one, and lead the list; "Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father, and keep my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God." (Lev. xix. 3.) It is plain that a law which sus-

tains such a relation to God's great moral code, must be something more than a prohibition of labour.

But the meaning of that law comes out more clearly in subsequent legislation. On the Sabbath, the daily offering of a lamb in the morning, and of another in the evening, was required to be doubled; as were the accompanying meat-offerings and drink-offerings. (Num. xxviii. 9, 10.) This increase of service, it will be seen, was by no means great enough to be burdensome; yet it sufficed to mark the religious character of the day. In addition to this, the people were required to assemble on that day for special worship. "The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no work therein; it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." (Lev. xxiii. 1–3.) Accordingly, it was natural that respect

for the Sabbath, and respect for the holy place where the Sabbath was to be observed, should be inculcated in the same command. "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary. I am the Lord." (Lev. xix. 30.)

Distinct indications of this Sabbath worship meet us farther down in the Old Testament books. The author of "a Psalm or song for the Sabbath-day," breaks forth in this grand strain: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High." The prophet Isaiah, too, amid similar predictions, foretells, as the sign of the church's future growth and glory, that "From one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before the Lord." (Isa. lxvi. 23.) And Ezekiel proclaims it as the law of the temple which he sees in vision, that "The people of the land shall worship at the door of its inner court before the Lord, in the Sabbaths and in the new moons."

The Sabbath worship of synagogues in New Testament times is familiarly known to us all, as is the respect which our Saviour and his

Apostles constantly paid to it. And when, after the resurrection, the seventh-day Sabbath fell into disuse, its worship was by no means abandoned, but only transferred to the first day of the week. On that day the disciples met to break bread, and listened while Paul preached. (Acts xx. 7.) On that day, each Corinthian Christian was directed "to lay by him in store" for the relief of poor saints. (1 Cor. xvi. 2.) Whether the "store" was to be public or private, the act equally betokened the holy use of the day. On that day, too, the apostle John devoted himself to those high spiritual duties which prepared him to receive the Apocalyptic vision. Add to this the religious respect paid to the Lord's day, both in the writings and the usages of the early church, and it is plain beyond question, that from the first announcement of the Sabbath law until now, the church of God has counted every seventh day sacred to religious duty.

The proofs that we have quoted have borne most directly upon the public worship of the

by its terms and the inspired history of its observance, but by the obvious and imperative needs of those for whom it has been given. For if the repose of the seventh day is necessary for our bodies, the spiritual advantages of a holy Sabbath are at least as necessary for our souls. We are made up of these two parts; and neither is entitled to displace the other. Yet our spiritual part is entitled to rule. The body, at best, is but

> "The earthly root,
> That makes its branches lift their golden fruit
> Into the bloom of heaven."

A perfect man, if he could be found, would be one in whom soul and body should be in complete harmony: the soul in union with God, expanded, stimulated, controlled by all affectionate acquaintance and sympathy with himself and his plans; the body, offering every sense and member and passion to the prompt accomplishment of the soul's behests; and both together feasting with unabating relish upon every wholesome gratification of thought and sense. Such a man would not need a Sabbath.

Sabbath. But obligation to household and personal devotion on that day is not left in question. "It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." (Lev. xxiii. 3.) That most striking passage of Isaiah, too (lviii. 13), not only exacts of men their concurrence in the public duties of the Sabbath, but their personal and hearty reverence for it all. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord." Surely no acts of public worship, however complete, can meet all the demands of these comprehensive words. Add to this that the last hint which the Scriptures afford us concerning Sabbath worship, presents St. John "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," not in the midst of a congregation, but alone.

But the spiritual scope of the Fourth Commandment is fairly to be illustrated, not only

Or if that blessed day were appointed for him even in paradise, it should come, not like music after discord, but like a melody flashing out among stately harmonies, and hushing their mighty march, while it lifts up joy into rapture. But we can live no such life as this; and that, for two reasons. One is, that sin has just reversed the relations of soul and body, and made that master which should be servant. And the other is, that the objects which appeal to our degraded tastes and passions are all near at hand, besieging every sense, while spiritual things are far removed, and are quite invisible. Now, if a sinful man were only to live among these worldly influences, he must be sadly warped by them. But let them furnish the material of his daily thought and labour. Let him look to them for the means of all comfort and aggrandizement, so that his heart shall grow to them by the power of every affection and energy and habit; then let there be no break in this mischievous training, but let every day be worldly: and how shall the invisible things of God and the soul get access

to him? Those may answer who even pay the Sabbath an outward homage, but discard its spiritual use. Let them rise up in our churches, where they sit not inattentive to the utterance of God's word, and testify how the love of the world makes them insensible to its power.

Now, the spiritual Sabbath is God's means of deliverance from this thraldom. It brings up the slave out of his mine to show him the heavens and the light. It is medicinal and restorative. It undertakes to compensate for a mighty evil by an opposite good; and to this end it must surely be more than a day of recreation or repose. How many hours of sleep, or of social pleasure, will be needed to loosen the grip of a week of worldliness, and to surround a soul with the great things of God? Nor must it be a day of common innocence, or kindness, or even devotion. Its office is to lay up a store of spiritual thought and feeling. A man who lives beside a spring may drink and go his way. But the fainting traveller across a desert, feels his heart leap for joy

at the first sight of the palm trees. He hastens to the refreshing waters; he drinks his fill of them; he bathes his brow in them. But he does not turn his back on the green leaves, till he has filled every vessel with the precious fluid. If his flask were filled with diamonds, he would pour them out that he might fill it with water. The Sabbath is our spring in the desert, and its supplies are equal to our needs.

We are now prepared to understand those words of our Redeemer, which the enemies of a spiritual Sabbath so often quote against it. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Could any words be truer, or of more transparent meaning? Christ says the Sabbath is the means; and man's advantage is the end. But what advantage? Evidently that which the Sabbath is adapted to secure. Just so, in an important sense, nature was made for man, and not man for nature. "God hath made him to have dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever

passeth through the paths of the sea." Then how shall nature serve her lord? In part, with harvests from her fields, and fleeces from her flocks; with music for his ear, and beauties for his sight. But is this all? And have those perverted nature, who stand with tearful ecstacy within the sanctuary of towering mountains, and make ladders of their glittering steeps, with which their souls mount up to the very throne of God? Nay, in heaven itself, there are seats prepared for man. Is heaven, therefore, a mere elysium—a paradise of the false prophet, with pleasures for every sense and none for the soul? The Sabbath *was* made for man. Let it do its whole work. Let it relieve the weary limbs. Let it smooth the brow of care. And let it lead the penitent to the Cross. Let it "preach good tidings unto the meek; let it bind up the broken-hearted and proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound." And if any would limit its office to rest and pleasure, they must seek a better warrant than this; that he, who counted men's souls worth

dying for, declared that "the Sabbath was made for man."

The law of the Sabbath, as we have thus reviewed it, presents itself to us in a twofold aspect.

It is the announcement of God's *claim*. By the Sabbath he says: "I have not cast out my creatures into this world of toil and temptation, regardless whether they serve me or forget me. At least on this day, my children, come back to me from all your distractions. Acknowledge my goodness and your indebtedness. Acknowledge my law and your sins. On this day, too, be still and listen to my voice. Then gird yourselves again for duty; and so carry the thought of my authority through all your days of worldly care and danger." In monarchical countries, the national flag floating over the palace is a sign that the monarch is within. God has set up his Sabbath on earth as the signal of his royal presence. And there is no truer test of loyalty than the kind of regard that is paid to the sacred emblem. The law of the Sabbath, more

than any other, puts men to the proof, "whether they will keep God's commandments or no." Other commands stand connected with obvious and speedy results, whether of good or evil, which may ensure obedience to them quite independently of any regard of the lawgiver. Thus a man may keep himself from theft, murder, or adultery, from a natural fear or disgust of those mischievous sins, and yet never think of God. Now, the keeping or the breaking of the Sabbath entails results, and of the largest proportions; but they are not so sharply defined nor so near at hand, as to control men's natural instincts or fears. In that law, the authority of God, who ordained the Sabbath for himself, stands out in the brightest light; and all remoter motives to obedience lie in the shade. The man who keeps that law, then, keeps it for God's sake, and therefore keeps all laws. The Sabbath is the dyke which God has reared against the sea of human passion. Behind it lie the green fields. While it is firm, they are safe. When it is thrown down, neither waving corn, nor sacred homes, can stand

up against the turbid flood. The Sabbath is the finger-board, set up by God where the two ways meet. Upon it is written, "Those who fear God walk here." No finger-board marks the other path; but those who find perdition at the end of it, remember that just at this point they turned aside.

But the Sabbath is not only nor chiefly an exaction. It is a *promise.* God would never require men to seek him, unless he were willing to come near to them. He *blessed* the Sabbath-day as well as hallowed it. And thus, even under the old economy, side by side with the law of that day, stood the promise: "In all places where I record my name, I will come unto you and bless you." The Sabbath convocations and sacrifices were not so much an enforced tribute from men to God, as a trustful appeal for the covenanted blessings. Nothing but the most heartless and ignorant formalism, ever perverted even the Jewish Sabbath into a day of austerity. The statutes which guarded the day were rigid, indeed, as they needed to be. But they were

only the wall about it. The Sabbath itself, with its holy ways and worship, was appointed to be "a delight." So the nation used it in its best days. They "entered into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." Their exuberant joy could only half express itself with psalteries and harps, with cymbals and dances; and so they challenged the "floods to clap their hands, and all the trees of the wood to rejoice" with them "before the Lord." It was not their Sabbath worship, but the loss of it, that made them sad. "My heart panteth for the courts of the Lord." "They wept when they remembered Zion." "I will cause," said Hosea, "all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her Sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts." And Jeremiah complains in his Lamentations, "the Lord hath caused the Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion." So little do those men know of the ancient Sabbath, who would make the abrogation of the day one of the favours of the gospel. The gospel was not meant to rob men, but to enrich them. God's Sabbath always was a

blessing; the Pharisees' Sabbath was a burden. Christ tore off the burden; but the Sabbath he blessed anew, and hallowed it.

What significance has his grace added to that day of mercy! Interpret it by his gospel, which it now proclaims; by his cross; by his resurrection and ascension; by the promise and gift of the Holy Spirit; by the history of its own triumphs; by its pledge of a future rest; and the day becomes almost a sacrament, a seal upon God's covenant, the "visible sign of invisible grace." As often as it dawns, the promises waken like "the birds that sing among the branches." Nay, the whole day is a promise. It is more than that; it is a promise fulfilled. It brings what it offers—pardon for the guilty, grace for the fallen, help for the despairing, comfort for the sad. The Sabbath is the point at which the circle of our sins and sorrows and the circle of God's grace touch each other. It is the open portal between this world and heaven. When our Redeemer ascended the everlasting doors were lifted, and they have not closed again. On this side there

presses to them the multitude of needy men, saddened with sins and fears. On yonder side is the glory of the throne and the Intercessor, the fulness of joy, and the innumerable company of angels. The sad faces kindle in that holy light. Men sing, and think they hear the voice of seraphs. Abounding grace and abounding sin confront each other; and grace triumphs.

II. Now, how shall this Sabbath be kept? The most obvious and the safest answer is: According to its design.

We tend naturally to formalism. It is so much easier to control the lips and the hands than to control the heart, that we are always tempted to construct a routine of outward duties, and to call that piety. The next step is for bigotry to make its forms a law for others. And thus God's grace, that is ordained to be inward joy and strength, is turned into chains and fetters. This tendency has never developed itself more fully or more mischievously than in exchanging the spirit of the Sabbath for rules, and restric-

tions. As well might you banish from a household all family affection, and attempt to supply its place with rules of politeness. You have set up a dry skeleton where there should be a beating heart and the glow of life and love. Let us be sure that the law of the Sabbath is a law for the soul; and the soul must keep it or it is not kept. In other words, the first requisite to a well-kept Sabbath is a hearty consent to the spiritual design of the day.

Does it follow, then, that Sabbath-keeping is a matter independent of all rule, and that each man is to regulate it for himself by his own taste or caprice? Far from this. The Sabbath is appointed for ends, and these ends are to be attained by adequate means. A lover of the Sabbath has a double work before him. He is to rescue the day from common uses. He is to consecrate it to spiritual use and profit. And in both attempts he is to employ, first of all, the means which God has formally prescribed.

The day is to be *rescued*, then, 1. From worldly work. The body must have rest and

refreshment, that the soul may have leisure and spirit for grasping the things that are not seen.

2. For the same reason a man must rest from the thoughts of work; for these are work itself, and of the most absorbing character. A Christian, in his weekly labor at his loom or work-bench, can come far nearer to a Sabbath temper than does that man who, on the Sabbath day, carries his half-formed plans to his fireside or to the church.

3. So, too, the Sabbath must be secured from worldly pleasures. Surely, those that are forbidden on other days are doubly mischievous on this. And those mere pleasures which on other days are innocent have no right to cumber this ground. The tastes which content themselves with literature or art, or even with mere nature, the social delights of friendly or learned conversation, hospitality itself as a means of worldly pleasure, the very affections of home if kept down to the level of common worldly kindness, all withhold the day from its use. These things are beautiful in

their place. Bring them up to the level of Sabbath feeling, and they may adorn the Sabbath too. But while they remain worldly, they pervert the day.

4. Nor is a curious concern for any worldly interest entitled to absorb this holy time. Events that are lodged in the memory or that announce themselves on the Sabbath unsought, or calls of duty that may need a prompt response, may fairly shape the current of Sabbath feeling and action. But no grandest event quite beyond us in the world; not even the tramp of armies and the convulsions of a nation, have a right to disturb the silence of that sanctuary. The Sabbath frame is concerned not so much with the passing acts of a providence that cannot be scanned, as with the grace of a covenant ordered in all things and sure. Christian men among us have mistaken the use of the day, when they have suffered it to be distracted by curiosity concerning human achievements even in a holy cause. Better for that day at least to "dwell in the secret place of the most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

In a word, the instincts of a heart in love with the Sabbath will teach it what engagements the Sabbath precludes. As a father in foreign lands is jealous of his very pleasures lest they may obscure his vision of the far off group that watches for his return, so he who wishes to keep that holy day, needs no man to teach him what hinders him in the work. One who watches the sun will know when it is clouded.

The reasonableness and necessity of these restrictions will not be questioned by those who revere the Sabbath. But a multitude of men who would not call themselves its enemies, will by no means submit to them, and thus there has sprung up a form of proverbial philosophy which assumes at once to honor the day and to overleap all its restraints. "The better the day, the better the deed." A man is bent upon his work or pleasure, and conscience checks him with God's command, Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. He only needs to utter his talismanic proverb and the command is dumb and his conscience free.

But whence does this spell derive its power? Not from its evident reasonableness; it means nothing. Can a good day sanctify a bad deed, like profanity or murder? Can a good day sanctify an indifferent deed that has no sympathy with its design, but is driven into the midst of its holy affections and engagements like wood into the living flesh? Days do not make deeds good. Deeds help to make days good. Man is more than the Sabbath. Is there anything in Sunday light and Sunday air to disinfect and spiritualize a human soul or a human act? The good deed is the deed that fits the good day, and then indeed, the day with the grace that is in it makes it better,—fuller of spirituality—fuller of promise—fuller of joy and strength. If the saying assumes to mean more than this it is a mere lure, a trick of Satan, a sententious falsehood, with which to silence a conscience that knows not how to silence itself. Men may take the bait if they will; but they shall find at last that a jingle of human words does not drown the voice of God.

But the Sabbath is not only to be rescued

from worldly uses; it is to be *devoted to its own spiritual ends.* And here again, the methods first to be used are those which God has appointed.

1. The "holy convocation" of the Sabbath was expressly appointed under the Old Testament, and the New not only presents the example of its continuance, but the formal command, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together." That public Sabbath worship and instruction are adapted to further the ends of that holy day, is too evident to demand illustration. If any proof on this subject could be needed, the visible connexion between such worship and a high toned piety, whether in communities or in individuals, would abundantly supply it. No man can depreciate the public devotions of the Sabbath without casting contempt at once upon God's appointments and human experience.

2. But there are more private means of nourishing piety which befit all days, and especially those which are devoted to spiritual profit. Among these are the reading of the

Scriptures, secret meditation and prayer, and the various acts of family devotion. And these home duties of the Sabbath, like those that are more public, not only have the warrant of divine law, but are identified with the whole history of spiritual religion.

But these two forms of Sabbath piety are so well known and practicable, that no sincere soul is in danger of mistaking them. A more interesting question remains: Are there any other legitimate means of hallowing the day, that lie outside of these more formal religious acts? Is the whole Sabbath to be absorbed in offices of devotion? Is it to begin and proceed and end under the awe of a conscious and direct approach to God? Surely not. A good man indeed, spends all his days and especially his Sabbaths, as in God's sight. Love, and faith, and reverence take perpetual note of his presence. But formal devotion is more than the indulgence of these emotions. It is the most serious and responsible appeal of a soul to its maker. It is the highest act both of intellect and feeling. Our minds were not meant to

hold themselves perpetually to that highest exercise. It belongs to other beings, "continually to cry holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." Accordingly, through the week at least, we have to do with worldly things which, while they do not need to withdraw us from the presence or thought of God, do of necessity interrupt our direct devotions. And even upon the Sabbath, both our mental constitution and our relations to outward things demand frequent intermission in the exercise of worship. Nor is this necessity to be regretted. It is a part of God's plan, which is the wisest one. We are to be religious as men—not as angels. Our humility, our penitence, our gratitude, our faith, our joy, our very hope of heaven, all take color from the actual condition in which we are. God touches us with providence and grace, at every point of our contact with surrounding things. And thus every object of wholesome interest has to a pious soul, a voice for God. These men have made the saddest of blunders who have withdrawn themselves from the world, in order

to get nearer to heaven. The ladder that scales heaven has its foot on earth. The pilgrim weary with a common journey, and anxious with common cares, gets from his pillow of stone, the vision of ascending and descending angels. The Sabbath itself, with what taste of heaven there is in it, does not transport us thither; but brings heaven down to us. "The Sabbath was made for man;" and there is no delicate taste, no generous affection, no warm desire of his regenerated nature, to which its holy day with its great thought of God constraint, ciled in Jesus Christ, does not appeal, one enters strings the harp again; and the Sabb contagion; over it like a breath from heaven, e most from string gives music. , nature, hope,

How well the holiness of the blends with thoughts and deeds o , our Saviour has been careful to teach no one can think of the countless activi and Christian charity which that day quickens the home and the Sunday school, in the chamber of sickness, and among the abodes of ignorance and vice, without blessing God for Sab-

bath mercy, both in the name of "him that gives and him that takes."

That the reverent contemplation of God's works may kindle Sabbath joy and praise, is proclaimed by the whole church, as often as she sings "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handy-work." The whole creation has no wall so blank, that a spirit of love and faith cannot open through it a way into the chambers of demgery. In the very repose and silence of of worsbbath, men sooner detect the footsteps gretted. voice of God. The light of his coun- the wisestalls upon the landscape like a second men—not outlines are clearer, the colors are tence, our greaches are longer; and when at very hope of ill horizon stretches away toward actual cond sky, far, far beyond it, beneath the us with rines of sunset clouds we look into the of our clear depth of heaven. Destroy the thpiritual Sabbath, and even nature mourns over her glory departed. You have left us the earth, but no memory of Eden. You have left us the staring foreground; but where is the

dear distant background with its visions of rest? We hear the animated din of fields and woods; but where is the harmonious undertone that shall weave it into praise? Men boast of their Sunday liberty, and pity the Christian who has lost it; and while they range the world like a prison yard, he finds it a court of heaven.

And so of every object of human interest that can nourish true piety. Let a man really love a spiritual Sabbath, and it becomes to him on every hand, a day, not of constraint, but of freedom. He enters it not as one enters a hospital where every touch is contagion; but as he enters a garden, to get the most from it. Home, children, friends, books, nature, hope, memory,

> "All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,"

so that they have a true voice for God and Christ, are free to utter it. The world, in spite of sin, is God's and not Satan's. "More are they that are for us, than all they that can be against us." "Heaven and earth are full of

the majesty of his glory." The Sabbath like a shekina lights up this temple; and while "all his works praise him, his saints bless him."

But the unconstrained and cheerful Sabbath for which we plead, must not be perverted to license or indulgence. To prevent this, there are three obvious restrictions on which we need to insist.

1. The first of these has been more than implied already. No man is entitled to pass by God's means of Sabbath improvement, for the sake of others which he may think better. The spirit which neglects public worship for private, or the instruction of revelation to find "sermons in stones, and books in the running brooks," sets out with contempt of God's express will, and only pretends to honour his day.

2. The spiritual designs of the Sabbath are to be conscientiously pursued. Its employments must be chosen, not because they are pleasant, but because they are believed to tend to the highest religious duty and advantage. And,

3. No man is entitled to make his Sabbath-keeping a stumbling block in the way of sin-

cere souls. Mere cavils and fault-findings a conscientious man can afford to despise; but he has no right to use his liberty in misleading or bewildering the tender consciences of God's true children. Even the prejudices and errors of earnest piety are to be opposed, not by mere assault, but by the careful explanation as well as adoption of the "more excellent way."

Within these limits the Sabbath is a day of freedom and delight. The mistakes of its friends, as well as the hatred of its enemies, have represented it as a day of gloom and austerity. A true Sabbath is just as gloomy as is true piety; just as gloomy as a heart can be, that is at peace with God and assured of heaven, that hears the voice of a loving Father in every mercy, and sees his hand in all his works. It is true, that with all this experience of faith and joy, the Sabbath will mingle confessions of sin and tears of repentance, wailings of grief and prayers for deliverance. But the Sabbath does not make the sins or the sorrows; it only takes them to a compassionate Saviour for relief: and

the highest pitch of all its ecstacy is just at that point where "the sorrow is turned into joy." Would that all those who hate or dread the day, could have a fair experience of its spiritual delights. What unknown refreshment, what expansion, what satisfaction it should bring them! It should lie across their rough and shaded pathway like a gleam of sunshine upon green pastures and still waters. Men would find themselves in a new world, if every week should roll it into this belt of heavenly light.

But most men have no proper enjoyment or regard of the Sabbath, and this fact devolves a new obligation upon those who sanctify the day; namely, that of teaching others to sanctify it. This duty will assume different forms according to our relations to those whom we seek to benefit. I speak,

First, of Sabbath duties toward *children;* a topic, the mere mention of which will not fail to excite the interest of every Christian parent. As we attempt to discuss it, let us keep in mind the cardinal principle already asserted, that the end to be gained is not the establish-

ment of a routine of Sabbath acts, but the enkindling of a hearty love for the spiritual uses of the day.

The first step toward such a result, is to inculcate reverence for the day as an institution of God; and the chief means to that end, must be the practical reverence which is shown it by the parent himself. Example speaks not only louder than words, but sooner than words. Our young children with their first intelligence are to observe that there is one day that differs broadly from all other days, in its employments, and pleasures, and words; a cheerful day, yet a day of order and quiet. Then when, at length, they ask us, "What mean ye by this service?" let us tell them how God rested on the seventh day and hallowed it; how our Redeemer, by his resurrection, has given double sacredness to the Christian Sabbath; let us show them what uses it serves, and thus how God's command and our advantage conspire to make the whole of it sacred. But the instruction will avail nothing without the example; and just here begins

the history of many a misguided household. If Christian parents degrade the day by unbecoming acts or pleasures, no orthodox instructions will bring their children to keep it holy. If the secular paper be admitted to the dwelling; if the Sunday dinner become a feast; if common worldly topics come freely into the conversation, and words of piety scarcely at all; if common books be read, and common visits made or welcomed, the case is decided. You may train your children to a formal, decent keeping of the day, but if they shall either know or love a spiritual Sabbath, it shall be by other means than yours.

But though reverence may be the foundation of love, it is not the superstructure. How shall children be brought to love the Sabbath? Evidently by learning that it is worth loving. And here, again, the lesson is to be taught first by parental example. No emotion is more contagious than joy, and Christian joy within the narrow confines of a home is sure to diffuse itself. Let those who sing with us, "Welcome,

sweet day of rest," see the welcome on our faces, and it will be reflected from theirs. Let the Sabbath prayer be fragrant with gratitude and praise. Let us be "glad when they say unto us, let us go unto the house of the Lord." When we come from our closets, let our faces shine with the light we have borrowed from God, and those who watch us will not need to be told that the Sabbath is to be loved. Our Sabbath joy will go down to our children, as we find in our gardens, that where pansies grew, pansies grow again.

But can we do more than this? Children's joys and men's joys are not quite the same. Can a holy Sabbath be made a children's day? It can, if piety be intended for children. Indeed, their sensitive natures respond most easily to every religious influence. Who, that is blessed with recollections of a childhood passed in a Christian home, will set any of those dear memories above such as cluster around the Bible stories learned by heart from mothers' lips; the sweet hymns which those same lips sang to tunes, that have ever since

seemed to have the melody of heaven in them; the wonderful pictures of the Wicket Gate, and the Delectable Mountains. But every Christian parent knows how rapidly his material of religious instruction and entertainment has increased in these late years. Every form of human enterprise, and knowledge, and skill, has employed itself in illustrating to the ear, and eye, and mind of childhood, the truth and excellence of our religion. Were learning and art ever so worthily employed, as in pouring into the minds and hearts of little children the light and melody of the gospel?

I need not say how largely the Sunday-school, when wisely conducted, aids in making the Sabbath interesting to the young. Let the host of earnest men and women, whom this good work employs, be careful to subordinate all entertainment to the holy uses of the day, and not the day to mere entertainment; and they shall not only be valuable helpers to those who hallow it in their homes, but they shall make the Sabbath venerable and lovely to multitudes, who but for them would have been trained to dishonour it.

But there is one chief means of winning the hearts of children to the Sabbath, that needs to be used more commonly and heartily. I speak of cheerful, simple, religious conversation. What a wonderful power is that of speech, by which one soul pours out all its wealth upon another, making the very air to throb with truth, and feeling, and holy impulses! Was ever so vast a power so lavishly conferred? If only one man in a generation possessed it, the rest would count him almost divine. But all men are furnished for it; nearly all times and places give scope for it; all motives stimulate it, and all hearts are open to it. Yet what preëminent power belongs to holy speech, when uttered and enforced by unquestioned piety and love in the Sabbath quiet of a Christian home? Besides, what inexhaustible material of entertaining religious conversation is within the reach of every Christian parent. Think of the Bible alone, with its touching, simple narratives, open to the comments of a child, and its deeper truths and allusions, out of which the plainest adult intel-

lect can, with the commonest helps, draw endless interest. Think of the stores of profitable knowledge embraced in religious biography; in the early history of the church and her martyrs, and especially in her present glorious enterprises. If themes like these could ever become barren, what affecting topics remain in the history and condition of every household. There are the afflictions that God sent, and the ends that they served; the brother, or sister, or grandparent, that God took to heaven; the last sickness that still needs healing, or the mercy that has healed it already; the absent father, or brother, brought home in safety; the blessings that are new every morning; sweet sleep and healthful waking; food and shelter, and the countless comforts of a Christian home, which all come from God. Then add to these things the grace of the Redeemer, as a delighted experience can describe it; his willingness to save, and the abounding proof of it; the need of Christ, which a child can feel, and that precious promise of the Holy Ghost to those that ask him, which our Sa-

viour, by his touching comparison, has made the very theme for a parent's lips. Then think of heaven, and all the eager questions which a child's mind starts concerning it, and of all the hopes that cluster around the place, where some of the family, either young or old, have gone already, and where all may meet at last: and shall a Christian parent, that has a tongue, be in doubt how he may make the Sabbath a delight in his dwelling? The fountain that should water your garden bubbles high up upon the hill-side. Lead the stream and let it flow. Open your own lips, Christian parent, among your children. And if your heart is empty, let Christ supply it. If the inconsistent week makes you dumb upon the Sabbath, cure the inconsistency. You are appointed to be the light of the dwelling, and if the light that is in it be darkness, how great is that darkness!

In our attempts to bring our children to a true enjoyment of the Sabbath, there are two cautions which, I think, we should steadily keep in mind.

One is this: that until they heartily love the Sabbath, they will be sure to love something; and exuberant, childish feeling will seek expression on that day as well as upon any other. We cannot leave it unrestricted; and to restrain it needlessly, will make our children either rebels or hypocrites. Let us suppose, then, that the most careful and spiritual attempts to win a child to the love of the day have failed; then what shall authority do? It is very plain that it may exact of him conformity to so much of the Sabbath law of the household, as is clearly enjoined by God himself. This definition will include attendance upon public worship; for that service is formally demanded, not only of parents, but of "their little ones." It will also include participation in the Sabbath worship of the family; "it shall be the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." This same command, as well as the organic law of the day, will require a Christian parent to withhold his child from work, and by an implication too plain to be mistaken, it will require him to forbid such

employments, or sports, as must manifestly frustrate the designs of the day, either for the child himself, or for the household which he would disturb. But no law of God, and no principle of Christian prudence, warrants the perversion of the Sabbath into a day of tasks. The compulsory conning of hymns, or catechisms, or of Scripture itself, is no proper means of honouring the Sabbath, or of learning to honour it. A man, when most in love with that holy day, would never think of gratifying his love by the mechanical memorizing of a chapter. And such study is a child's work. It belongs to the week. To exact it of him on the Sabbath, is at once to profane the day and to make him hate it. Well-meaning parents have made great mistakes in this direction, and loaded the Sabbath with such grievous burdens, that children have learned to dread the thought even of heaven, when they have been told that heaven should be like a Sabbath. The true office of parental piety is to make the day a delight; and where it cannot succeed in that effort, it at least will not make it a terror.

We need to remember still farther, that even after our young children shall have come to love the spiritual Sabbath, they will love it as children, and not as men. The same sedateness of feeling and demeanour, that years and experience may have produced in us, would not become them even on the Sabbath. Let us be glad and thankful, if they give to God and to his day the cheerful, effervescing love of childhood.

But no discussion of the household duties of the Sabbath ought to end, without at least an allusion to the special encouragements which both God's covenant and all experience give to those parents who heartily discharge them. I have supposed, just now, that that such duties might fail of their end. But in truth it is the misdirected or inconsistent effort that does not succeed. God's plans are wise and complete; and there is no sweet influence of grace that does not touch the susceptible feelings of a little child, in the midst of a holy, cheerful, Christian Sabbath. I know what depravity is even in a child's heart; but

grace and God's covenant are stronger. And I cannot doubt that the godless children of Christian parents, are the children of parents who, in the one direction or the other, have perverted the Sabbath from its design. They have hedged it about with restrictions and terrors, and so have taken the love of God out of it; or, what is even worse, they have broken down its defenses, and trampled it with worldliness, and so have robbed it of all authority. Is it not possible that the frequent criticisms upon the children of ministers, so far as they are just at all, have found their occasion in the fact, that the minister's Sabbath is too commonly suffered to withdraw his mind from the sacred needs of his own household? It is a fearful sacrifice, and no public duties are entitled to exact it. You who have not even a temptation to make it, take heed that the home of your children be brightened with the light of a happy, holy Sabbath-day. God's blessing is in no other home; and from such a home it never departs.

It remains that we consider, in the last

place, Sabbath duty toward the *enemies* of a spiritual Sabbath.

There is no land in which common human depravity does not find motive enough to set itself against a holy day. But well-known causes have congregated in our country a host of men, whose enmity to the Christian Sabbath has been developed in every possible school, and into every shape. How wicked and greedy men contrive to stimulate their hatred; how an infidel Sunday press arms and leads it, and how demagogues employ it, does not need to be told. Nor can we be blind to the evils with which an influence so mighty and malignant invades or threatens religion, and social order, and liberty itself. We may well doubt, moreover, whether those who are now waging our most holy war, when they shall at length be disbanded, will give evidence that the habits of the camp have strengthened in them the power of those affections, which welcome with the greatest relish God's day of rest. And thus the question, which we now approach, assumes the grandest

importance in the estimate both of piety and of patriotism: What duties does the Sabbath law enjoin toward the multitude who hate a holy day?

A minute answer of such a question could only be shaped by special circumstances. But the general principles that define those duties, I think, are plain.

Let us remember here, again, that the end to be gained, is not the constraint of men to a set of formal Sabbath acts; but the education of the whole community to a hearty love and use of the spiritual Sabbath. Now, the admission of such a principle may seem, at first view, to limit the efforts of the friends of the day to mere argument and persuasion. And the limitation would be real, if its enemies were contented with refusing to love it. With such an evil, mere authority has no warrant to meddle. But if men not only dislike the Sabbath, but assault it, then the office of its friends is first of all to defend it; and they are held to this duty by a regard not only of their own interests, but equally of the

interests of the mistaken men whom they seek to restrain. Thus, when the law of God, both in his Book and in our nature, requires that the seventh day be given to rest, it is as fairly the province of human law to defend that day from the exactions of work, as it is to prevent any other fundamental wrong to individuals or society. And since the mere cessation of ordinary labour would leave the Sabbath an open field to men's passions and vices, it becomes the office of the same legislation that secures the day to rest, to prevent its perversion to a class of pleasures more wasting and dangerous than Sabbath labour itself. This double restraint would be severe if men had no other resource than labour or vice; but so long as a Sabbath withheld both from toil and indulgence, leaves them still within easy reach of the highest and most satisfying pleasures of intellect and feeling, the human law infringes no human right while it stands the guardian of Sabbath rest and Sabbath morality. But when human law changes this attitude of defense into one of assault, and undertakes, not to guard the

civil Sabbath from the attacks of human passion, but to fasten the spiritual Sabbath upon men's consciences, it undertakes a work at once tyrannical and hopeless. The duty of the friends of the Sabbath, then, is simply this: to stand against the violence of those who attack it, as they stand against the violence of theft, or murder, or any other crime; namely, by law: but to approach the hearts of those who hate it, with the only power that can win a heart; namely, with kind persuasion. Men will love the Sabbath, not at the bidding of authority, but under the mightier influence of Christian charity and the grace of God.

The question then is, How shall the prejudiced multitudes about us be brought within the scope of this mighty influence?

The first thing, evidently, is to make them know what the Sabbath is. The friends and the enemies of that day are like two parties of Alpine travellers walking upon different levels. These are in the clear air, with all the glories of the everlasting hills around them; and those are beneath the mist, without a sight

of the earth or of the sky. Some faintest cadence of our far-off song falls on their ears; but they neither know who are the singers, nor what makes them sing. The first thing is to bring the Sabbath and its enemies together. If you ask me how this shall be done, I will not reply with over-confidence; but some thoughts like these are in my mind to-night. I remember how God has compacted in his gospel all the influences of truth, and law, and love, and motive that are best adapted to reach and sway the souls of men; how he has adapted that truth to vivid utterance and enforcement by the lips and sympathies of living preachers; how the Redeemer, who is the centre and substance of it all, has left with those preachers the pledge of his perpetual presence and grace; and I ask myself, Can the Sabbath, the day of the gospel, be brought close to the hearts of its enemies in any other way so natural, so practicable, so full of promise, as by sending among them the fervid utterances of the gospel itself? I know how much has been done in this direction; but I reflect upon none

of the excellent men who have sustained or conducted those efforts, when I say that they have not been made upon a scale worthy of the religion that has prompted them, or of the momentous ends at which they have aimed. Avarice and vice spare no cost nor pains in making their Sabbath haunts alluring to their victims. We, too, when we rear our Sabbath temples for ourselves, are careful to make them pleasing to every taste. Shall those who love neither the day nor its worship be allured from their sins, just by the open door of a preaching-room? If men's souls and God's honour are worth the sacrifice, why should not many a building as inviting as this—planted in the darkest parts of our city, where Satan's seat is—tempt into its ample aisles the multitudes whose steps take hold on death? Would it be too grand a vestibule of heaven? Or have they who already understand the spiritual glories of our gospel more need of this appeal to sense than those who neither love it nor know it? Let that noble army of Christian men in this city, who hold their wealth for

Christ, enquire whether they cannot serve his cause and the Sabbath's by offering to the poor and to the prejudiced such places of Sabbath worship as shall win them to honour the day.

But the place is not all, nor half. Every man knows that the same great facts and principles may be set forth with varying interest. The gospel is a system of truth to be presented by men to men. Its success, indeed, it must always owe to the grace of God; but God still makes the human qualities of the preacher the very channels of his grace. When one would sway a jury in behalf of his important cause, he counts the learning and the logic and the eloquence of his counsel so many means to the desired end; and all experience shows that men's hearts are not so accessible to the truths of religion that all lips can announce them with equal success. I disparage none of those who, in this city or elsewhere, have imitated their great Master and preached the gospel to the poor. In most respects they are the equals of their brethren; and in some, their superiors. But this task of winning reluctant men to the

regard of the Sabbath requires qualifications not like those of other men, but far in advance of them. The man that leads the forlorn hope must be every inch a soldier. And here the conflict is to be with ignorance, with vice, with life-long habit, with national prejudice, with infidelity, with perverted learning, with eagle-eyed sagacity, with busy "tongues set on fire of hell." Blessed be God for the help of his Spirit; but still send your best man. We do this with the far-off heathen; why not do it with the heathen at home? I think of such a man as Henry Martyn Scudder, lifting up his clarion voice, every Sabbath day, within some graceful building as large as those clear tones could fill. In what godless corner of this city would you plant him, where the population would not crowd to hear the gospel from his lips?

But you will confound my argument by the illustration I have chosen, and tell me that such rare talents are not to be commanded for the work. Then tell me the grander work that may command them; where shall the sword be

sharpest, at the hilt or at the point? Shall your Pauls, if you have them, be most needed among the converts or among the heathen? And if in the ministry, as everywhere, talent and energy can win their reward, shall the man who has them, send himself upon his mission at the sacrifice of his common comforts? Or shall those into whose laps God pours yearly treasure see to it that the Sabbath's most sacred cause is served, even though the labourer receive his hire?

But I am granting too much. The necessary talents are not so rare. An emergency in politics will call forth an army of speakers who can hold applauding crowds for hours. And is there so little material of human interest in the gospel of Christ, or is piety so barren of the elements of eloquence, that an earnest church can open more pulpits than it can worthily fill? It cannot be. Make the place, and it will make the man. There are preaching in our land to-day scores of men unknown to fame, whom the mere consciousness of standing at such a point of contact between

the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan would kindle into a power of manly eloquence of which neither their hearers nor themselves have ever dreamed. The experiment, I know, would be costly; and theoretic objections to it are not wanting. But it has never been tried; and in such a cause one chance of success out of twenty would more than warrant the trial. Could there be a fairer field for it than is offered by our German population of more than a hundred thousand souls?

But it is fair to doubt whether our Sabbath worship in our own sanctuaries commends the day as it might. Two hundred congregations of Christians meet weekly in public places to utter in the hearing of God and men their joy over his salvation. Never was there such room for human gratitude and exultation; and the very office of the day is to give them utterance. With the sounds of labour hushed, the Sabbath stands forth in the view and hearing of men, God's witness and ours to the excellence of true religion. Our public worship

especially, brings together the separate rills of gratitude and joy, and pours them along in one tide of praise. Men ought to hear it flow. I think it was an error that has taken from so many of our congregations the privilege of uttering even the hearty Amen. I am sure that it is by something worse than an error that the significant duty of holy song is deputed by silent multitudes to the artistic execution of a few trained voices. Joy does not speak by proxy. It has its own voice, and it is our shame that while the Sabbath worship of the Jews, uttered amidst sacrifices, withheld no token of ecstacy, our Sabbath worship, prompted by the grace of Christ, restrains even the voice of singing. It stamps religion as tame, if not as gloomy. It contrasts the Sabbath in the saloon with the Sabbath in the church—not, as it should, by the difference between the pleasures of sense and the joy full of glory—but, so far as a worldly man can see, by the difference between pleasure and no pleasure, between an exhilaration that gives a glow to the cheek and fire to the eye and fer-

vour to utterance, and a cold propriety that hears—and feels nothing. "Oh bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard." "Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in him with psalms." Our cheerful worship should give the Sabbath a voice, and drown that falsehood that calls it a gloomy day.

But the friends of our holy day have other means of commending it to its enemies.

And chief among these is their own practical veneration of it. In every community that can be called Christian, the Sabbath-keepers hold the first place; they take precedence of all other classes in intelligence, in morals, in thrift, in social position. Thus, what they do stands out in public regard, while infidelity and vice either skulk in corners, or else pretend to a currency which even the multitudes of their adherents cannot command for them. God has set his city on the hill; the rest must build below it. It also follows that Christian men fix the standard of morals for men who are not Christians. To raise them to that standard is indeed

slow work, and only the Spirit of God can make it effectual. But it is a great thing to show what virtue is, and to make it respectable. Where religious men concur both in definition and in practice, the law is pronounced, and, in the abstract, at least, all men accept it. In reference to what point of morals does the Christian church stand a unit upon one side, and the moral sense of the rest of the community, or of any considerable part of it, stand upon the other?—The Christian estimate of the spiritual Sabbath will shape other men's esteem of that day, just as soon as Christians agree in it, and live up to it. But theory and practice must go together.

When it is known, for example, that the industry and thrift of the religious class are largely represented in our great moneyed corporations, the community may fairly demand that their religion shall control the capital, and not the capital their religion. And if, for the sake of larger dividends, they wink at a system of unremitting labour, which leaves their servants no Sabbath rest nor Sabbath wor-

ship, how shall their own well-filled pews compensate for that inconsistency before God or man? "The cries of the labourers, whose *hire* is kept back, enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." Does God care more for money than he does for souls? Or will those over-tasked labourers sooner believe the lips that reckon the Sabbath above all price, or the hands that seize their Sabbath to turn it into gain?

Just so if the Christian family that rests upon the Sabbath according to the commandment, accords no Sabbath rest to those domestics who may serve the purposes of luxury or show, shall its estimate of the day's sacredness be most impressively announced in the rest which it takes, or in the labours which it exacts? Let us remember that the influence of these practical lessons is not limited to the narrow circle within which they are given. Those who load your Sunday tables with needless viands, or prepare the Sunday equipage for needless journeys, will make no secret of their Sunday work; and their testimony reaches that very

class who most need to be won to reverence the day. Who can tell what contempt and hatred of God's holy Sabbath filter down among the ignorant and prejudiced, from homes that echo with Sabbath songs? And on the other hand, who shall measure the persuasive influence of that considerate and conscientious piety, which in so many households keeps the Sabbath law for "man-servant and maid-servant," as well as for "son and daughter?"

In truth, it is quite impossible for any good man to make his Sabbath thoughts or acts so private, that they shall not exert a direct and powerful influence upon the public feeling. His sentiments will come out in a hundred incidental ways. In conversation, in Sabbath intercourse with visitors, in his conduct on journeys, but chiefly in the impression he makes upon his own children. In these days of enterprise and change, no man can foretell the future home or position of the boy at his fireside. When a chemist would produce crystals, he prepares his solution, introduces his

nucleus, and soon a fine needle shoots out from the centre to the circumference; others articulate themselves to this, and so the jar is filled. The child who is learning from you to reverence and love the Sabbath, may thirty years hence be moulding men's opinions and practice a thousand miles away, in the centre of the broad continent, or on the shore of the Pacific. What is told him in darkness, he shall speak in the light; what he hears in the ear, he shall proclaim upon the housetops. Those earnest men, whose wise and most successful efforts for the Sabbath have attracted your attention to my words to-night, if they should describe the influences that have enlisted them in this cause, would point you to some red-gabled farm-house among the hills of New England, or to the homestead on the Hudson, or possibly, to the far-off cottage among the blue bells and the heather, where their childhood drank in the love of God's Sabbath at the knees of Christian mothers. We see the cluster in the tree-top, but the root is far away in the cleft of the rock. Nourish hopefully these plants

of righteousness, for God shall make them "fill the land. The hills shall be covered with the shadow of them, and their boughs shall be like the goodly cedars."

The Sabbath, however, has another sure and most direct approach to the hearts of its enemies. Our office, as Christians, is to do good in the world; and our Saviour has marked the Sabbath as our most precious opportunity. It is the intermission of labour, but not of pain. It withdraws the poor and wretched from the employments which help to dissipate their grief, and leaves them face to face with their troubles, an easy prey to every temptation. That is the day for walking among the multitude of impotent folk and saying, "Wilt thou be made whole?" This duty of the Sabbath is beginning to be done, and in ways that cannot be ineffective. The recent enterprise of mission school instruction, selecting its objects from the very classes that most need to learn what the Sabbath is, is scattering in every direction such rays of its holy light, as cannot be overlooked or extin-

guished. However low may be the motives that resort to this charity, the charity itself is like Christ's; and "wisdom is justified of her children." Divine kindness is stronger than even human selfishness, and it is a gain to the former whenever they meet. But let the children who take our benefactions, also take home with them our Sabbath truths and songs; or, best of all, let grace do its frequent work of kindling piety within those young bosoms, and then our holy day has gained a life-long witness just where the testimony was most needed. This Christ-like work is only begun, and its fruits are not yet ripe. But it is to spread over the land like light, and the children of infidels and Sabbath-haters, a whole generation, are to bury the prejudices of their fathers at the threshold of the mission school.

But Christian love is not restricted to any organized method of Sabbath kindness. The doors are open on every side, and where Christ would go, if he were with us, there his servants are bound to go in his name. What if the

wealthy Christian merchant should be found on the Sabbath at the bed-side of his sick porter, and should leave with him some tokens of sympathy both for body and soul; when should that visit be forgotten? Would the open-mouthed children, that should see the great man's gift, and hear his prayer, be quicker or slower to accept, in after life, the slander that the spiritual Sabbath is a curse, and that those who keep it are hypocrites? An earnest heart can easily find room, in such directions, for a most beneficent and persuasive Sabbath work.

There is, indeed, a counterfeit and mischievous Sunday kindness that is far too common. It is the mere friendliness which makes a neighbour's sickness the occasion of a kind of visiting, demanded neither by necessity nor mercy, which, with its din of worldly conversations, often makes the exhausted sufferer pray that the misnamed day of rest might end. What an outrage it is upon all propriety, when possibly the last Sabbath of a dying man, that ought to catch even the whispers of heaven, is overrun by a trampling multitude, and

that, too, in the holy name of Christian kindness! It is lawful to do good upon the Sabbath day; but see that the good be done. Visit the sick who need your visits; and go, not in the name of Sunday leisure, but in the name of Sabbath love. Go at a cost of trouble and of goods; and let men know what sends you. As they are cheered by your words, and refreshed by your dainties, draw aside the veil from the angel that leads you, and let them see that it is Christ's Sabbath. We should thus find in our day of joy and hope a power of blessing which even the church has not yet appreciated. We have used it for standing about our Redeemer, and taking the bread that multiplies in his hands. It was meant to multiply again in ours. We have regarded the day as the monument of Christ's resurrection, and so the pledge of our own. It is the pledge of more than that. There is a dead world to be quickened, and the church is to speak the word; not as Christ spoke it, standing in majesty beside the uncovered grave, but as Elijah and Paul spoke it, stretched

out upon the dead—hearts, and hands, and lips together, and quickening the lifeless nostrils with their breath of prayer.

I cannot leave this topic without touching a question which is very commonly agitated, and which even the friends of the Sabbath sometimes answer doubtfully. Should not the rest-day of labouring men embody elements of mere recreation, for which the more favoured classes have no excuse? Should those who are held all the week, and from morning to night, to different forms of exhausting toil, be expected to divide their one day of repose between their confined and squalid apartments and the church? Since nature in her most lovely forms is brought to their very doors, may not they and their children find even their Sabbath worship in the midst of the graceful landscape? The question seems to admit but one reply, until you add another question to it. Does the Sabbath, when devoted chiefly to physical recreation, tend to elevate the labourer above the necessity of his unremitting toil, or to hold him to it? How

many of the children of Puritan fathers, who have lived worthy of their training, need to make the Sabbath their only escape from exhausting toil and squalid homes? Or if they find themselves sunk to such a necessity, shall their escape lie through the buzz and flutter of a Sunday holiday, or along the forsaken paths to the sanctuary of God? Will you apply your remedy to the symptom, or to the disease; to the soul, which shall not fail to find in the gospel the motive and the method of thrift and independence, or to sense, which gathers up its pleasures, and is as needy as ever?—Whether those who are most interested in this question will promptly accept this solution of it, is more than doubtful; but inasmuch as God has lodged in a spiritual Sabbath the promise "of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," no refusal of men to embrace these substantial gains will warrant us in taking the very life out of the day, and exchanging the wine and the milk for water spilled upon the ground, that cannot be gathered.

I know very well what can be said of the elevating and purifying effects of a day cheerfully spent under the open sky; how all nature is made a temple and man the priest, and his innocent joy itself the most eloquent worship. But our religion has taught us a different language. Worship begins at the Cross, and the Cross is set forth in the gospel. The very office of the Sabbath is to lead men to Christ.

If it be said, then, that a man may meet Christ in the park as well as in the church, I answer, that cannot be. There is a promise for those who assemble in his name, and no promise for those who forsake that assembling. Let men meet God in God's own way; for those who dishonour that way shall not meet him at all. If Sabbath recreation, then, ever be right, the prescribed Sabbath worship must at least come first; and they who shall have tasted that spiritual worship, will not think of prolonging it among a laughing crowd.

This whole work of Sabbath reform among the masses may seem, from its magnitude and

difficulty, to be quite discouraging. Yet God's Spirit and promise are on the side of its accomplishment. Our only real discouragement lies in our own unfaithfulness. The friends of the Sabbath are but half awake, while its enemies never sleep; and the most dangerous of those enemies does his work in the community almost without opposition. I speak of that irreligious newspaper press which both desecrates the Sabbath itself, and assaults it on all other days. The mere existence of such an agency, dangerous as it is, would not need to alarm us; for God's promise assures his faithful church against this danger as well as all others. But what if good men look on in silence while the mischief is done? What if they even make terms with the enemy so that they shall help him into ten thousand homes, their own among them, if he will help them to news or to trade? In such an alliance only one party can be the gainer. When good men and Satan meet on the same side, he sacrifices none of his interests for their friendship. He is the leader, and they are the underlings.

They win his battles and he pays them their wages—a poor recompense for the injury they offer their own Master. It cannot be one of the necessities of Christian politics or commerce, even in a sinful world, that it should at once use and help that class of journals which, by set purpose, oppose the vital interests of God's cause and day. The logic that excuses the unholy compact may pass current in the market place; but it cannot bear the searching eye of Christ.

I would have every good man resolve that no paper that is fairly known as the enemy of religion and of the Sabbath shall have from his hand the help of a farthing. His daily or weekly pittance may seem to be nothing to so gigantic a system. But it lives by pittances, and asks for nothing more. The traffic of the press is like no other. It sells the same facts and thoughts over and over again to an innumerable multitude; the price it demands is a mere mite from each, but each mite is a new one; and the result is a mighty revenue. With a wicked press the bargain is,

a very little money for a very potent curse. Let no man that fears God be a party to that traffic. I would not help the enemy of my country either to a ton of powder or to an ounce; and I would do no more for the enemy of God. Even if what I should withhold could prove no loss to him, it should be great gain to me; at least in conscious loyalty and in my power to pray. But, in truth, the Christian community has control of this whole evil. As soon as we are thoroughly in earnest we can bring it to an end.

Meanwhile, the most fearful mischief done to true religion in all our land is done by Christians who, by their money and their countenance, give currency to sheets whose direct aim is to train the multitude to the hatred of godliness. Is it not worse than trifling for us to feed the very fountain of popular prejudice against our cause, and still to complain that the prejudice is so great?

In all this discussion of Sabbath duty, I have set the standard high, where I think God has

placed it. In so doing, I in no way disparage that sort of Sabbath observance which pays the day a decent outward respect. I bless God for the multitude of men who, although they lack all spiritual enjoyment of his holy day, yet throw the weight of their social influence upon its side; for those families in which, if there be not heard the hearty utterances of devotion, the course of common worldliness is checked, and at least formal efforts are made to instruct the young in religion; and for all that social order which distinguishes the Sunday of our great cities from the Sunday of Paris or Vienna. These things are valuable and full of promise; but the day that God blessed and hallowed was appointed for greater uses than these.

God holds our fickle hearts to steadfastness and hope by mighty verities grounded in himself. What we can reverence is precious and mighty, and what we cannot reverence is common. And thus God's law and grace for sinful men, are made to meet in a Divine Redeemer, a Divine Gospel, and a Divine Day. Take

away their divinity, and they are nothing. Your Redeemer becomes a man, your Gospel a human book, and your Sabbath a holiday. The true Sabbath stands forth as the herald of the other two—of the word which men can see, and the Redeemer whom they cannot. Without *them* a pretended holy day would be a cheat; and without the Sabbath their voice would be dumb. They belong together. The Sabbath is God's day, announcing God's Son. Be thankful for it, then, and keep it holy.

What a wealth of blessing and power is bound up within it! Our Sabbath is a *day*, and not a place. Not a far-off Jerusalem or Mecca which a few pains-taking pilgrims may visit once in a life-time; but a day, pouring its frequent flood of light over the whole earth; shining into all eyes, and offering to shine into all hearts. It is a whole day. Two nights keep guard beside it, and divide the sacred hours from all others. It dawns out of darkness and fades into darkness again, a separate burst of the excellent glory.—It comes like other days. Nature has received command-

ment to bring it back; and no will of men can stay its coming. They may hate it or misuse it, but they cannot blot out the sun. "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." And yet in itself it is only a day. It is the same light, the same sky, the same world. It brings neither nature nor man under the power of any new physical law. Life, and death, and thought, and action, all move on according to their settled order. Then what makes your Sabbath? The almighty grace of God, freely given and reverently received. The wind that breathes over "the mountains of spices," is like any other wind; but it goes away laden with "sweet-smelling myrrh and frankincense." The light that falls on the cathedral window is common light; but it wraps in untold glory the bended worshiper upon the marble floor. The Sabbath is a common day, until it is loaded with the new light of God's presence. Christ and his Spirit make it. The bare day is pure nature, and they are pure grace; but they come together, another incarnation. The visible Sabbath is a visible

Gospel. No wonder that the Fathers called it the "Queen of days." Common days pour their light over the earth and the sky. But this day is grander. Within its broad horizon fall all objects that can awe or charm us. From its Delectable Mountains you may catch on this side, the distant verdure of the first paradise; and on that, the dim outline of the celestial gates. Far-off mountains define themselves in that clear air. The faint blue pyramid of Ararat, where the ark rested; the top of Pisgah; Tabor, with its crown of light; and Zion, still glittering with courts and pinnacles. In fuller view stands Calvary with its cross; and Sinai beyond it, no longer clouded. The nearer landscape quivers with moving men; and separate multitudes pour forth, from the shade of palm trees or of pines their strife of harmony. And, dim as a cloud, on the far-distant highway, all nations and kindreds—an army with banners—are walking in the light. In this sevenfold brightness the visible sky itself dissolves, and a higher firmament embraces the great white throne, the coming King, and the chariots of God.

"This is the day that the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

See how its marvellous light has been spreading over the earth. Long ago it lifted its morning beams upon the tents of the Patriarchs. Then it blended with the sound of cymbals and cornets, and the songs of multitudes in the holy city. Then the grace of Pentecost gave it wings, and a score of provinces began to feel its cheerful warmth. It visited the lands of our fathers across the ocean. At length this distant shore caught the rays, while it heard the first Sabbath song from the lips of the pilgrims. And now, in spite of all the powers of darkness, the vertical beams flood the wide land. They sleep upon the silent plow and hammer. They steal through fragrant blossoms and the hum of bees to lay quivering shadows on the wide pages of open Bibles, and on cottage groups in neat attire. In crowded cities they fall on many a silent pavement; or on the long train of those who go to the house of God in company. And even in the camp their steady gleam shines

back from the stacked weapons of a worshiping army.

Is it a curse or a blessing? Let your hearts tell, and your Christian homes; and the graves of your dead. Nay, what commonest blessing have we which the Sabbath has not either given or enhanced? Men cry out against it, in the name of liberty. Do they know that the spiritual Sabbath, bringing men near to God through Jesus Christ, was the first influence that ever made them at once too great to be slaves, and too just to be tyrants? Do they know that this grandness of Sabbath piety alone laid the first foundations of freedom in this land; and that our Sabbath hymns, fragrant with the memory of martyrs, will float around our battlements a better safeguard than thousands of ordnance? The day has made us, and made us for a witness. Let the testimony be given, and what power shall be in it! The busiest nation on the earth resting on God's Sabbath! The freest nation binding itself on that day by the restraints of God's safe law! A nation made of all the na-

tions testing the truth and proclaiming it, that the way to knowledge, and wealth, and power, and liberty, and virtue, and domestic blessing, as well as to true religion and the hope of glory, is led by God in the light of his Sabbath! It is true; let the world hear it, and from us. But if we shall be silent or unfaithful, this advancing light shall not be checked. Barriers may rear themselves; it shall scale them without ladders. The floods may lift up their waves; yet the Lord shall lay among them the beams of his chamber. The dark world has the promise of the long noonday, and waits for it as the frozen North waits for the summer. Already the brightening hemisphere turns farther and farther toward the mounting sun. The warm effulgence steals down into deep valleys that never were so blessed before. At length the evening and the morning twilight meet; they mingle; they are gone; "and the glory of the Lord covereth the earth as the waters cover the sea."

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THE

BENEFITS OF THE SABBATH,

BY THE

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of the Sabbath.

THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN, AND *Luke* ii. 27.

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The Benefits of the Sabbath.

"And He said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—*Luke* ii. 27.

It is one of the many advantages attendant upon the serial discussion of a subject, such as that now in progress in regard to the Sabbath, that there is not only a *division* of argument, but an *accumulation* of argument, at each successive stage of the process. The divine origin and authority of the Sabbath once established, a prodigious advantage is secured for us as we undertake to treat of the benefits of the Sabbath. We have, for the premises of our argument, this rudimental fact, that the goodness of God must underlie and pervade all his enactments; that his entire legislation for the welfare of the world has actually been epitomized in this one word *love;* and consequently we reach the certain deduction, that "in keeping God's commandments, there is great reward." Whether

we are successful or not in collating, out of our own observation and experience, all the advantages which accrue to individuals and communities from obedience to the Sabbatical law, here is a standing-place, high, and broad, and firm, from which we take our start, that the commandments of God are of no doubtful tendency, but invariably conduce to the good of our species. The more copious our induction of facts, the wider the sphere of our observation, the more evidences do we gather, that all the parts of this universal system, the humblest and the grandest, have some relation, more or less important, to the interests of the human race. Science has detected certain occultations and immersions of the satellites of Jupiter; but even those phenomena, occurring at a point so remote in the heavens, have been proved to be of the greatest practical use, in giving accuracy to the computation of longitudes, and so perfecting the safety of navigation. If it be so, that the whole mechanism of nature is full of these adaptations subservient to human advantage, how certain is it, beyond

the possibility of a doubt, that the positive enactments of the Almighty, emanating immediately from His beneficence, are laden with blessings for all who treat them with obedient regard.

We claim for the topic assigned for this occasion,—which is, the *benefits of the Sabbath*—another advantage, of which it is right to avail ourselves, growing out of the form in which the topic is presented.

Early in the present century, the National Institute of France proposed a prize for the best treatise on this subject: "What has been the influence of the Protestant Reformation on the progress of knowledge and liberty in the several nations of Europe?" Villers, the author of the successful essay, very adroitly begins his argument with this idea. The time was when those intending to discuss the influence of the Lutheran Reformation, would have proposed the subject somewhat after this manner: "What are the evils which it has inflicted upon European Society?" But now the question is, What has been the ef-

fect of that great movement on the progress of light and liberty? and this change in the form of stating the question, carries with it the proof of a change in human convictions.* After the same manner may we take advantage, in our present discussion, of the form in which the topic is presented. That topic is, What are the benefits which follow the observance of the Sabbath? Psoradic objections have been made by irreligious or sceptical men to the keeping of the Christian Sabbath; but no one ever dreamed of presenting the subject on this wise: "What are the evils brought upon individuals and nations by a careful observance of the Sabbath?" That form of statement would shock the general judgment of all Christian civilization. Individuals may be found to depreciate the Sabbath, or to take the negative view of its benefits; but what man, of respectable parts, addicted to honest thought, ever conceived the project of dissuading an intelligent community from observing the Sabbath-

*Essai sur L' Esprit et L' Influence de la Réformation de Luther. Par Charles Villers.

day, by proving the evils consequent upon its recurrence! The very service which we are invited to undertake this evening—to enumerate some of the benefits of the Sabbath—of itself, demonstrates how deep-seated and general is the conviction, that the proper observance of this holy day is immediately related to human well-being.

These preliminary remarks will the better prepare us to receive the saying of the Lord Jesus, chosen for our text: "The Sabbath was made for man." This was aimed at the micrology of the Pharisees, who cavilled at our Lord for an act of charity performed on the Sabbath, showing that their notions concerning that holy day were based on superstition, rather than on a just conception of it as appointed by Him, who would have mercy rather than sacrifice. Since the Sabbath was intended to promote the benefit of man, whatever is necessary to that benefit, is obviously to be allowed upon that day.

It is of great service to us that the topic next preceding this, the duties of the Sabbath,

and the mode of observing it, was discussed with so much discrimination. There are modes of observing the Sabbath which are of questionable utility. Mistakes and improprieties may obtain in connection with the day which entail mischiefs, that would have been avoided by a wiser method of its observance. If that is made a task-service, which was intended as a privilege and delight, all the benefits designed to be conveyed by it are lost. A fatal injury was done to Lord Bolingbroke, by the well-intended but mistaken act of his grandparent, in compelling him, in his early boyhood, to pass his Sabbaths in reading Dr. Manton's one hundred and nineteen sermons on the 119th Psalm.

If some are left to regret the mistakes which were made in regard to the mode of observing the Christian Sabbath, others will confess that their associations with the day, under a more judicious training, are of the opposite character. I speak to many who cherish the memories of the Sabbath as among the fondest of their lives. Never do they associate with it any-

thing repulsive; but everything which is attractive and delightful. The poetic image which is retained, when much else is forgotten, is the picture of the summer Sabbath in a rural home; when all within was so full of comfort, peace, and love, and all without so bright, so fair, so tranquil; the air laden with the perfume of the clover and the rose; and all so sweetly still, that the crowing of a cock, or the lowing of a cow, could be heard from one end of the village to the other, and a contented, honest, frugal people, left their houses open and unfastened, as they went up to the house of God to worship.

The duties pertaining to the Christian Sabbath have been summarily described as cessation from secular labour: together with such employments as pertain to divine worship, religious instruction, and acts of Christian usefulness.

Let us now proceed to specify some of the benefits which are found to result from such duties. These naturally arrange themselves in order, as physical, intellectual, social, and religious.

It would be cynical to object to the mention of physical advantages, as beneath the solemn dignity of the Christian pulpit. God cares for cattle; much more for the bodies of men. The specific mention of thyself, thy son, thy daughter, thy man-servant, thy maid-servant, thy cattle, thy stranger that is within thy gates, as included in the common prohibition from work, instructs us that such rest is not the privilege of classes and orders, but a right and a necessity which pertains to man as man, —to the human organization, and by a wider generalization to the whole animal economy. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." Observe how the double construction of the law is made to face the two extremes, which are practiced by men in regard to the Sabbath. Some are disposed to disregard the Sabbath entirely, prosecuting secular work on that day as on other days, to whom the law addresses its positive interdict, "Thou shalt not work." Others, practicing what has been so

forcibly called, by an apostle, "will-worship," have appended to the Sabbatical law so many voluntary appointments of their own, occupying the whole of the calendar with their saints' days, and feast days, for which they claim an authority equal to that of the Sabbath, that the consequence has been, in many countries, indolence and waste, to whom the fourth commandment presents another aspect—"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work"—so that out of the two teachings concerning the duty of work and the duty of rest, we have that compound law which we are now to illustrate.

It was a profound remark of Aristotle, that the "end of labour is to gain leisure." The contrary opinion is the more common. Intensity of work, with little regard to ends and uses, is itself exalted into a virtue. Compared with doing nothing, with laziness, work may claim a high nobility. The exercise of our faculties seems to be essential to our highest enjoyment; accordingly, man, in his state of innocence, possessed of a most munificent patrimony, was di-

rected to keep and till the exuberant garden in which he waked to consciousness. But when sin invaded the earth, *work* was changed to *labour*, which implies hardness and the sweat of the brow. A necessity is laid upon man to work, somewhat like that to which criminals have been subjected in a cell, into which water is introduced so rapidly, that they must pump or drown. Since the curse has fallen upon man, and upon the earth for man's sake, labour is necessary as the means of human subsistence; and after the necessities of mere bread-getting for the sustenance of life, there comes a troop of passions, cupidity, ambition, pride, prompting man to ceaseless and excessive toil. The moment you touch the point of a liberal provision for animal necessities,—the surplus of time, and strength, and acquisition,—you have a reserved power which is to be applied to higher and nobler ends—to the enjoyment of life and to the decoration and improvement of society. The whole of life looks to an eternal Sabbatism as an end. But that end has its reflections and anticipations in this present life.

The very same word is employed in Holy Scripture to denote Christian rest on earth and ultimate rest in heaven. Unrelieved, constant, wearisome work, dwindles body and soul alike and bears man down into that depression, from which it is the aim of the gospel to bring him up. That man might know that work by itself, however intense, cannot sufficiently dignify and ennoble him, that he does not live, in the true sense, by bread alone—a limit is fixed in this direction—so that the jaded body may have its repose, and the jaded man may wash the sweat and dust from his brow, and lift it up in the brightness of a higher life. The testimony of physiologists, as to the necessity of rest and recreation to the most successful working of the human constitution, is so ample and so uniform, and this in coincidence with the measurement of time, as incorporated in the fourth commandment, that the thing to be wondered at is, that those of all classes, professions, and pursuits, who are doomed to incessant work, have not long since demanded the Sabbath-day as a great right of humanity, nev-

er to be extorted from any without a violence done to nature. It is a grand mistake of certain sceptics, to attempt to account for sin on the ground of physical causes, as some have done, who, like Shelley, have prescribed as a cure for the depravity of the soul, a more careful regimen as to diet and ablutions; but it is worthy of our profound and earnest thought, how much less of evil there would be in the world, if there were a more careful attention to those physical laws which have been ordained by the same Being who appointed the Sabbath. If God has designed that this natural mechanism cannot run incessantly without friction, and wear, and waste; if he has required this clang and clatter to stop awhile for rest and lubrication, then is it certain that the attempt to work it beyond the prescribed limits will be followed by irritability, and petulance, and evil passions, and insanity. When Sir Mathew Hale made the remark, which has now become classical, that he invariably observed that he prospered during the week according to the degree of fidelity with which he

observed the Sabbath, it was not the irrational suggestion of superstition, but a fact founded on natural laws. Who can doubt that the judgment of that distinguished jurist was the more sound; his discernment of affairs more clear; his whole personality more vigourous and available, after the repose of the Sabbath, than it could have been had his brain been kept under full tension and excitement through seven days of unintermitted labour? Lord Castlereagh adopted another practice, which resulted in another way. His overwrought nature, hampered and annoyed by the meshes of political casuistry, day after day, and week after week, without a Sabbath, broke down under the strain, and he died in the delirium of insanity by his own hand. I draw my illustrations, of purpose, from this class of working men, rather than from those who work only by strength of muscle or nicety of mere manual skill, because it is more suited to an audience like this, composed of men who work with the brain, in the counting-room, at the bar, on the bench, than to one made up of those who

drudge with sledge and spade. If the induction of facts should confirm what has been reported, that accidents have been most frequent and ruinous upon those railroads, on which work is compelled for the seven days alike, instead of disposing of it, as some pretend, as a mere whim, we should be prompt to assert, that an engineer, whose hand is on the lever of a locomotive every day, without that intermission which God has ordained, would be likely to impair that coolness of judgment, quickness of apprehension, and steadiness of nerve, which are necessary to the safety of the property and lives under his care, so that disaster would be the likeliest of all occurrences. The point which we make is, that He who ordained the law of the Sabbath is the Maker of the human frame; that this law is not an arbitrary appointment, but essential to human welfare; that it cannot be violated without inflicting harm on the constitution which it was designed to bless; that expediency and prudence, though they do not proceed from the same point with duty, invariably tend to the same result; in

short, that our Christian Sabbatism is a law of relief and of compensation, and any arrest put upon it is adding force and volume to that intensity of labour, which stunts the unthinking down into coarsest animalism, and precipitates those who think incessantly in one strain into exhaustion, madness, and death.

Leaving this position to be fortified by facts and experience, we proceed to remind you that our theory of the Sabbath, and of the mode of observing it, does not make it a season of sleep and vacancy, but a day consecrated to the holiest and happiest of all employments. So that the chief benefits of the Sabbath are yet to be mentioned. Whatever gives protection to the animal economy, whatever tends to give freshness and vigour to the powers of nature, is, indeed, of high importance; but it is so chiefly because of the intimate relation which subsists between a healthful body and a well-balanced mind, with other and higher ends of human existence.

So it occurs that the first and most grateful memories associated, in many minds, with the

Sabbath, relates to its *social* advantages; and these as distributed through families and communities.

Whatever tends to give life and power to domestic affections, is the grand ally of general virtue. The argument employed with so much power and success, by those who advocated the system of cheap postage in Great Britain, was based on the well-known effect of frequent communication with home, as the best safeguard, especially of the young. The Sabbath wisely and religiously observed in a family, not only infuses new life into the domestic affections, but provides the best occasion for their expression. A careful study of the Mosaic law on this subject, convinces us that the social worship of families and tribes, keeping fresh and vigourous at once the sentiment of home, and the sentiment of nationality, was one of the prime objects of the Jewish Sabbath, and of the various Jewish festivals. Much more is this true of the Christian Sabbath, which, as the great time-keeper of the week, the balance-wheel of order, secures the time and the place,

which otherwise would be lost for the culture and the expression of true love. Nothing better illustrates this fact, than the scene immortalized in the "Cotter's Saturday Night," by Burns; the gathering of all the household, scattered, at different tasks and in different directions during the week, one by one coming to their home, bringing their earnings, and their sympathy, and their love, to one common focus, at the homely hearth, where all is confidence, and cheerfulness, and affection, and their hearts are cemented by song and prayer. The general tendency of forces, in this world of selfishness, is repellant from all good centres towards individualism. Christianity counteracts this tendency by the introduction of a new force, drawing men to a new centre, which is superior to all selfish repellances. True religion is the strongest surety for domestic love. As in a family, whose several members reach adult life with their distinct residences and interests, affection is kept alive by a common relation to the parent stock, so religion comes in with its community of relations, hopes, and

blessings, to foster the sentiment of family affection throughout whole communities. Theories of socialism have been elaborated by men; but the most potent law for social good is that ordained of God in religious faith and worship. By this, men of all conditions, the most dissimilar as to rank, occupation, wealth, and intellect, are brought together in unity at a point so high, that it is above all ordinary human repulsions. Wonder not that the sentiment of nationality was so intense among the Jews, while flowing together from all the glens of the vine and the olive they chaunted the same psalms in their convergent paths, to the same worship in their metropolitan temple. The act of religious worship exalts us above all subordinate distinctions. It is frightful to think what violent collisions might, at any time, occur between the different classes of society, if natural jealousies, envyings, and hatreds were not modified or displaced by the bringing in of a better life. The rich and the poor meet together at the same altars of worship. The ordinary distinctions of race, language, complexion, and

condition, are obliterated by this magnificent idea of a common father, a common Redeemer, and a common heaven. Social worship in families, and in churches, is a power for the preservation and blessing of society, which, though we can only glance at it now, deserves the gratitude of our race for its most potent centripetal attraction. While some of the Psalms are specially suited for secret devotion, the great body of this inspired liturgy is designed for social worship; and so great is the delight of Sabbath songs; so great their power over all our faculties, our natural affections, our religious fellowships, suffusing eye and heart with joy while actually engaged in their use; and so great their influence over us, as they linger in our memories, that we are disposed to say, to all who thus keep the Christian Sabbath, that if this be not the way to heaven, we know not where or how to find it.

Attempts have frequently been made to caricature what has been called the *Puritan Sabbath*, as though it were a gloomy and austere institution, from which nature revolts. Time

works out the sure vindication of such as are maligned by prejudice. To comprehend just what the English puritan was, and what he intended, you must go back to his times and circumstances, and understand the antagonistic forces against which he testified. When the monarchy and churchmen of England undertook to compel Christian freemen to acts which conscience forbad, it was the most natural of all things, that opposing testimony should put on its most vigorous expression for the sake of contrast. When King James issued his "Book of Sports," and commanded the people to visit bear-gardens on the Sabbath-day, it was a matter of course that the brave men, who were called to oppose that desecration, should on their way to conventicle give an unusual length and gravity to their countenances, and occasionally an intentional twang to their songs, for the very purpose of making a defiant protest. Some time was necessary for the pendulum swung violently to an extreme to return to a just medium, and for the strained features to relax into a more natural expression. Nei-

ther laughter nor seriousness are matters of legislation or compulsion. Caricature, falsehood, and badinage set aside, we should honestly say, that few men, and few homes, on the earth, knew so much of cheerfulness, and peaceful enjoyment, and true contentment, and religious delight, as our Puritan ancestry in their Christian Sabbaths.

The religious employments of the Sabbath are divided between worship and instruction. Conceive the effect produced upon the *intellectual* character of those who, obedient to the law of heaven, give a seventh part of their time to such high occupations. In countries where worship is resolved into "bodily exercise," or the use of dead languages, or sacerdotal vicarship, and religious instruction is scanty and meagre, we could not assert much in regard to the *intellectual* benefits of the Sabbath. Let us come where a free Christianity has built its nest; where the Word of God is in the hands of all the people; and the Christian pulpit undertakes nothing less than to induce men to think, to compare, to judge, to reason, with

reference to those high concerns which God has communicated for our instruction. The influence of the Sabbath, simply as an educational institution, is beyond all measurement. "The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." This "pearl of days" is enclosed and protected from all other pursuits, that it may be given to those truths which are of transcendant moment. There is no knowledge like that which pertains to God, and redemption, and immortality. Other kinds of knowledge have their limitations; but this is related to infinitude, and so gives elevation to every mind that receives it. Even suppose that the Sabbath is passed, as of necessity it is by many, in the absence of professional preaching, but in the use of the fewest and simplest treatises of religion, the church catechism, the hymn book, and the Word of God. Let these be read in cottage homes, and what a dignity and greatness do they give to personal character. Under such an influence, you will see those in humblest life gradually lifted up to a grandeur of soul which has no

pride in it. They are made familiar with great thoughts; they are raised out of drudgery, misery and contempt, by the conviction which revelation inspires, that their true interests pertain to another life. Add to this general influence of religion, the effect produced by constant attendance upon Christian preaching.

It would not be fair to draw our illustrations, in this regard, from those who enjoy the ministrations of the great lights of the pulpit. Men might confess the influence exerted upon the intellect of a community, by the preaching of Owen, and Howe, and Krummacher, and Chalmers, and Edwards, who have not reflected much upon the prodigious effects which follow the ordinary fidelity of the parish pulpit. By what an insensible process is a whole generation taught to think and reason, in regard to things divine, by an habitual attendance on public worship! Most of what are called "Systems of Theology"—I refer now to those which have been published in our own country, and no country has been more prolific of them—

those of Edwards, and Dwight, and Emmons, and Hopkins, were originally preached as sermons on the Sabbath-day. No one would ask to be informed concerning the effect produced by such preaching on the intellect of a town, or county; but set aside the intellectual influence of men, whom to have heard would be regarded as a privilege by any, and think a moment of the results likely to follow the preaching of any educated minister, who, week after week, month after month, year after year, addresses the reason, the conscience, the affections, of any people. We can only compare it, as it has been compared in Scripture, to the dews and the gentle rains which distil on the plants. The words were adroitly chosen by Lord Stanley, when intending to give edge to certain antipathies against the Christian Sabbath he said, "I believe that the exclusive appropriation of the day of rest, in popular opinion, to subjects exclusively theological lies infinitely more than want of education at the bottom of that ignorance which we all deplore." *Exclusively theological!* What a well-chosen shaft of preju-

dice! Who ever advocated such a use of the entire Christian Sabbath? How small a portion of time, indeed, is given simply to the sermon, and this associated, as we have before observed, with songs, and charities, and acts of usefulness, and domestic delights, which give to the day its peculiar joy. But aside from reasoning, what is the testimony of facts? Ignorance broods in your Sabbathless districts; and the more the Sabbath is honoured, the higher is the intellectual standard of the people. Rigidly observed, the Sabbath invariably promotes intelligence and manliness. And here let me adduce another fact bearing on the same point. The expression which I have just quoted from a member of the British Parliament occurred during a debate in that body, in reference to the expediency of opening places of amusement in the city, on the Sabbath-day; and the speaker who most zealously advocated what he himself called the "French Sunday," used, for an argument, this fact or assertion: that all recreations and amusements allowed and fostered on the Continent, by vari-

ous monarchies tended most happily to keep the people in a state of quietude and contentment. This was at a time of political agitation and apprehension, and diversion of mind on the Sabbath-day is urged as a plea for what we would call its desecration. How much, whether intentionally or unintentionally, is covered up beneath this argument. To keep men quiet, give them a Sabbath which will amuse them; which implies that the other kind of Sabbath-keeping makes men think too much; and thinking makes men restless under oppression, and such men are dangerous! A most extraordinary corollary we admit; to which we reply, that the contentment which proceeds from unthinking ignorance is the least desirable of all conditions; and restlessness, which comes from intelligence, is dangerous to nothing but despotism.

All this is testimony in support of the position we have taken: that the Sabbath, rightly observed, invariably promotes intelligence, by affording time for man's spiritual nature to emerge from the flood of worldly avocations,

and feeding it with its proper pabulum; that thinking and reading and hearing on one subject, and that the grandest of all, accustoms man to thinking on all other subjects; that familiarity with our relations to God educates us to true greatness, making a "man more precious than gold, a man than the golden wedge of Ophir;" so that those countries where the Sabbath is most carefully kept and honoured are the most intelligent, the most free, the most advanced in civilization, while ignorance and depression keep pace with the desecration of holy time.

It remains that we should speak of another benefit of the Sabbath, and that the chief of all: its effect upon personal morality and religion. And here we are thrown back immediately upon the divine origin and authority of the Sabbath. The substance of the first table of the law, comprising within four specific commandments all the obligations of piety, are condensed into this compendium—supreme love to God in the heart—and this expressed in worship, in reverent speech, and in

use of holy time. This separation, by statute, of one day in seven, to bear the name of God, in a special sense, is the stepping forth of God out of remoteness and mystery into time, and confronting his creatures with a demand which tests, instantly, their pious regard for his authority. The whole of time is to be passed in a manner becoming those who regard themselves as the stewards of God—the whole is God's; but the Sabbath-day is distinguished from all other days, in this respect, that the mode of its observance is specified by divine requirements; consequently, the question of deferring to the authority of the Supreme, or asserting our personal will, must, inevitably, be decided by our regard or disregard for the Sabbatical statute. Obey it, honour it, and piety finds its expression: disobey it, dishonour it, and impious self-assertion makes its first open demonstration. In this view the Sabbath is a special ordinance for bringing man into the presence of his Maker, by applying a test which developes the principle of religious obedience. If it were so that we could not

perceive the effect of Sabbath occupations in giving life and vigor to religious affections; yet the fact that God himself, by an arbitrary decree, if you will, has commanded the consecration of the day, makes it certain that the mode of its observance will prove the presence or the absence of true piety.

The same in regard to the bearing of the Sabbath on morality as well as piety. It was the remark, not of a churchman but of a jurist, and he, the first of his class, Blackstone, "that a corruption of morals usually follows a profanation of the Sabbath." Why it is so is very obvious. The connecction is not accidental but certain. True morality is based on true religion. The best surety that a man will do right in all his relations to his fellow-men is in a purpose to do right in his relations to God. There is a distinction recognized in the decalogue between the two tables of the law—the one containing our direct duty to God, the other our duties to men. Now it is true that the requisitions of morality have been proved, and found to be coincident with all the suggestions of personal wisdom

and prudence. Moreover, the combined influences of the law and gospel have, by this time, produced a form of civilization in which inducements to immorality become fewer and weaker, while morality is discovered to be the method of all expediency. But an ultimate analysis proves that the foundation of morality is not in expediency or a prudent calculation of success, but in the eternal commandment of God. Now suppose that the authority of the Supreme is disregarded as to a particular precept: that when God comes forth to meet his creatures in actual time, confronting them with a statute which demands a peculiar observance of one day in seven, there is evinced a disposition to dispute and disobey that authority, and impiety makes its first protest and resistance; so far as divine obligation is concerned, you have sapped the foundations of morality also, and the only thing which remains claiming the name, is a thin superficial enamel which flakes off at the first touch of passionate will. Popular virtue must have for its root faith in God, and not a selfish regard for worldly advantage;

and faith in God there cannot be in disregard of his positive statute.

But this is not all that can be said concerning the relations of the Sabbath to personal and national morality. We are instructed as to the mode in which the Sabbath should be observed. Its occupations are peculiar; worship, instruction, and the direct and exclusive action of our minds in regard to matters of Christian privilege and spiritual intellection. There is a sense in which our daily work is religious. It should be conducted on religious principles, and in a spirit of obedience to Him who gives us all things. But there cannot be religion without worship, and worship cannot be without time. So needful is special time for purposes of devotion —for coming to the surface and inhaling the vital air—that we are required, day by day to enter into our closet and pray to our Father who is in secret. These intervals of secret or family worship during the week are like the prayers of labourers with implements in their hands, of soldiers with armour on, just lifting

the helmet for an occasional ejaculation. Then comes the Christian Sabbath, the whole of which is to be given immediately, directly and exclusively to truth, and worship, and religious communion. What is duty for the six days is not duty on the seventh. What is the high privilege of the Sabbath—a whole day of sacred leisure, imbibing instructions out of the Scriptures, or giving instruction to others, is not the common privilege of our race on other days of the week. The grand reason why men are so little affected by the obligations of religion is, that they are so completely immersed in the cares of this life, that they have no space for thinking of the life to come. And if the method which heaven has ordained for the soul's edification in things spiritual and divine, were to be dropped out of observance, it would be, for the generality of the people, as the breaking down of the dam which now dykes out the sea—the mad waves would roll over them and drown them in perdition.

If we are not able to discern all the blessed

effects which we might expect to result from the Sabbath, it must be owing to mistakes or defects in the mode of its observance. Consider what a power it is in the world—God's special appointment for the world's improvement. So silently and gently do these Sabbaths pass, that we are unmindful of the tremendous accumulation of power which they represent in the aggregate. The seventh part of human life to be rescued from secular concerns, and given to God and heaven! A young man of twenty-one, your Sabbaths are already to be computed in years — three whole years of holy time. A man of fifty, you have had your seven years of Christian Sabbaths. A man of three score years and ten, your Sabbaths amount to ten whole years of time! We can not say how wisely, how faithfully, how religiously you have kept them, but this is certain, together they constitute a prodigious power for the shaping of character; and if you have valued and improved each as it came and passed, you are in no need of testimony from without as to their influence on intellectual

culture, on personal prosperity, on social improvement, on spiritual hopes.

God's method of dealing with error when He has described it, and forbidden it, and denounced it, if men are bent on practising it, is to allow them to work out their convictions by an actual experiment. A glance at geography would be the best testimony as to the benefits of the Sabbath; for where it is honoured and loved the most there is the greatest amount of intelligence and freedom, and happiness, and morality, and religion.

We have predictions of many kinds as to the future of the human race. It would seem that as Columbus saw, from the mast-head of the Pinta, certain red berries and green stalks floating on the sea, the signs of approach to land, men were detecting here and there some indications of a future civilization which is sure to be realized. But the word of God is our certain pledge of that ultimate blessedness. Just how much is intended in the literal construction of prophecy—just what we are to believe as to the effect of true religion on health and length

of days and secular prosperity, as the last inheritance of society, we cannot say. But the promise of the Scriptures is exquisitely beautiful. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old. . . . And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. . . . For as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." And the coronation of this magnificent promise is "it shall come to pass that from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." Recall the happiest Sabbath which ever you have enjoyed. I will not ask you to picture such an one as has been portrayed by the sweet genius of Geo. Herbert, but such as you remember yourself—calm, tranquil, happy, with domestic love, and public worship, and the clear shining of the truth; and suppose that to become universal upon the earth! What more is necessary to realize all the hopes and destinies of the world; vigorous

health, long life, sacred leisure, clear minds purged from ignorance and prejudice, happy hearts overflowing with love to God and man, and holy lives consecrated to truth, and duty, and well-doing. Let it be the encouragement of all who now testify in behalf of the Sabbath, and who devise and labour and pray for its better observance, to know that this universal Sabbath will certainly come.

> Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
> Fulfilled their tardy and disastrous course
> Over a sinful world: and what remains
> Of this tempestuous state of human things
> Is merely as the working of the sea
> Before a calm that rocks itself to rest.

When that day shall come, as through the recovering power of God's Word, and Spirit, and Son it surely will, heaven and earth will be blended together; and all who have honoured the Sabbath on earth, shall enjoy a Sabbath without end in heaven.

CIVIL RELATIONS OF THE SABBATH,

BY THE

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Civil Relations of the Sabbath.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will exalt thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."—*Isaiah* lviii. 13, 14.

It sometimes happens in our dealings with nature, or art, or institutions, that some emergency obliges us to go back to the beginning to explore the roots, readjust the foundations, and rescue and restore first principles.

So it has happened in reference to the Christian Sabbath.

Adopted by this nation with the common Law of England, with which the Sabbath was inwrought, warp and woof; recognized again and again by our legislation throughout the land as peculiar and sacred time; a day shut out from the range of secular business, a non-legal day; cherished, too, by the people as the mother of many rich and rare social blessings,

the Sabbath has at length begun in some quarters to suffer a perversion which, by changing holyday privileges into holiday amusements, and construing the exemption from legal obligations as a freedom from legal restraints, has amounted to desecration. Then, as a natural consequence, the whole theory of the Sabbath has been contested.

Its authority, its perpetuity, its sacredness and its design have been contradicted by argument, as they had already been resisted by practice.

Hence the origin of this series of sermons, as well as of other means to vindicate and set on their true position the claims of the Sabbath in its various uses to man.

In lending such help as I may to this endeavour, my special theme is the Sabbath in its relations to the State, with the consideration of some of its safeguards.

Our text brings very distinctly to view the civil advantages of a right observance of the Sabbath.

"If thou call the Sabbath the holy of the

Lord, honourable, and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words, I will exalt thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Here we have a religious act followed by national and civil benefits. They are linked together as cause and effect, at least so far as the Jewish nation was concerned. It was, indeed, an abiding characteristic of that Divine polity under which the descendants of Abraham were bred, that religious obedience began temporal blessings. And since the principles of the Divine government are unchangeable, and since the Sabbath is as much ours as theirs, why should not the same links of connexion remain unbroken?

The origin of the Sabbath back in the creative epoch, when God rested from his works, and when there was only one human family on the earth, proves that the Sabbath was meant to be not Jewish, but *Adamic*. More-

over, the Saviour's declaration, "the Sabbath was made for man," although spoken for another and a specific purpose, seems to carry with it the idea of universality. If the Sabbath was made for man, why not for all men—for the whole race? And thus again the Sabbath is not national and local, but *generic* and general. So that in either of the fixed relations of human life, the Sabbath is capable of being a boon and a blessing to man. Among those fixed relations stands the national life of man. His social nature works out spontaneously into this form as one of its necessary and vital developments. While the domestic relation into which every man is born creates the sphere of those familiar affections, which we call home feelings, makes home the dearest word in human speech, makes the family circle the very realm of the heart's regency, and makes the family institution a perpetual necessity of human nature; and while, again, the religious instinct of man embodies and represents itself in that standing organization which we call the visible church, so likewise does the same law of social necessity urge

and drive out his nature into that other form of development, which groups the whole race into *nations* and *states*.

The world has never been without the several forms of national life, as a part of the fixed constitution of human society; and whatever, therefore, can do good or harm to man's essential nature; whatever was meant for the generic man, must take in his national as much as his domestic or ecclesiastical connexion.

The Sabbath was designed, no doubt, as the type of a public religious life, and it pre-supposes, therefore, the importance of religion to every community for whom the Sabbath was appointed. How important, then, is religion to the life of the State, becomes in this connexion an interesting preliminary question. And this question will be found to be answered only in one way, whether we consult philosophy or fact,—the nature of things, or plain human history. The nature of things teaches us, that no civil government can subsist long and effectually, that does not invoke support from the powers of another world. Its

oaths and affirmations must reach out into eternity. Its sovereignty must represent in the nation the dominion of God in the world.

The throne must be higher than the earth that men tread upon. The magistracy must be girded with a power that was not born of a creature. Its King must be hedged with divinity. And loyalty, submission and obedience must have an object higher than the common human preëminence of luck, or strength, or blood. The sentiment of reverence, which is the prime element of all religion, is the mother of civil order and the grand conservator of law. It nurses the common conscience, and holds the people by the bonds of a filial allegiance. No matter what the form of the government, all civil authority must gather to itself somewhat of a religious sanction, to be cordially and truly obeyed. And history bears out this antecedent evidence of reason. For where was there ever a nation worthy to be called historical, one which had ever emerged from mere animal barbarism, with whom religion was not a prime power and chief care?

However false the religious system, however absurd its doctrines, or superstitious its rites, they one and all appealed to that universal instinct which distinguishes man from the brutes, and suggests the powerful motives that belong to eternity; hopes and fears which, though often erroneous or extreme, betoken the superiority of his nature, and by their very existence prove him to be a subject of the highest moral government.

In Egypt, and among the Orientals, religion was the chief object of the State. This was the only tie that held the Grecian tribes together as a commonwealth. The Amphyctionic Council, the great reserved fountain of authority to the Greek States, was instituted for no other purpose than the regulation of religion. The ancient Roman constitution was characterized by the same feature; to which their great statesman and orator attributes all their national preëminence; for says Cicero, "Though we have been surpassed in population by the Spaniards—in physical force by the Gauls, in shrewdness and cunning by Carthage,

in the fine arts by Greece, and in mere native talent by some of our Italian fellow-countrymen; yet, in the single point of attention to religion, we have excelled all other nations; and it is to the favourable influence of this fact upon the character of the people, that I ascribe our success in acquiring the political and military ascendancy that we enjoy throughout the world."

If we follow down the times, we find the religious feature prominent, if not predominant, in the various forms of civil society, and through the progressive phases of national life; and so nearly universal, that when we meet the one solitary exception, now become proverbial, in which a nation deliberately rejected all religious faith, and strangled on system the religious instinct of human nature, we halt to mark the issue of such a monstrous experiment with man's moral vitality; and as we see it culminating in the reign of terror, wrenching asunder the limbs and ligaments of the body politic, and blotting one whole generation-page of history with human blood, we turn away

with the shuddering conviction that he who denies religion to the nation is guilty of a cruel falsehood, against which nature protests, and which time will refute in a nation's wailing and tears.

If thus much may be claimed in general for the value of religion to the well-being of the state, let us see how much more forcible these considerations become when applied to our national life and our peculiar institutions. For we have inaugurated a system of government which has no strict precedent or parallel in history. It has difficulties all its own, overbalanced, however, by capabilities which render it potentially the highest style of civil society.

Its difficulties are compressed and denoted by its very title — *a free government.* The seeming contradiction of these words is only an exponent of the antagonisms which must be practically harmonized to bring the government into working order and insure its success. "To make a government," says Mr. Burke, "is one of the easiest things. It is only for one to

command and for the others to obey. To give freedom is likewise easy. It is only to relax all control, and let men do as they will. But to make a free government is the most difficult achievement of man's reason."

The ground of the remark is obvious enough; for government, of whatever sort, implies control of some sort, and a free government is essentially a self-government.

The plain peculiarity of such a government is that the authority springs up from within itself.

Other governments are imposed upon the people—this grows up among the people. In other governments the people are compacted and hooped around by pressure. In a free government they are fused and mingled by an internal process into a solid mass.

The one is a diluvium, and the other a conglomerate.

The phrase self-government implies a duality of nature with oneself to govern and another self to be governed. Every human personality is a twofold self; the one comprising man's appetites, his passions, his will—in a word, his

selfishness; and the other comprehending his reason, his conscience, and whatever gives human nature its true and immortal dignity.

This is the higher and the true self of man, to which the attribute of sovereignty belongs.

He is not truly self-governed who surrenders himself to the dominion of his propensities, and lets the nobler self be conquered and ruled by the less noble. He is the victim rather of bondage so base that none can be more debasing. And this, which is true of the individual man, is equally true when you multiply the individual into a community, and enlarge the phase of character into a grand corporate national man.

The nation being but the aggregate of individuals, the national life and character is the grand resultant product of the affinities, combinations, actions and counter-actions which are constantly at work among the people themselves.

A nation given up to the dominion of selfishness and passion, would soon cease to be a nation, because it is the property of selfishness

to separate men and individualize them. In the heat of personal passion the cement of society is dissolved and leaks out—the community is disintegrated, the corporate nation loses its organic life and becomes resolved into the ashes to ashes and dust to dust of political chaos, which is *anarchy*.

A popular government needs, then, above all others, the controlling power of reason and conscience, the first to point out the right ends and means of government, and the other to determine the right motives; a power to enable the nation to stand sentinel over itself, not only to defend its rights against an invader, but to hold its own members in check; not only to fire upon a foe, but to point the bayonet at the breast of every truant, or insurgent, who would break the bounds of discipline and trouble the peace of its own camp. Now, when we speak of reason and conscience, we employ only another name for an enlightened religious sense. The nation, therefore, must be *religious*, and as the national life is but the aggregate of individual lives, every citizen must

furnish his quota of the aggregate religion of the nation. Nay, every citizen must be as scrupulously conscientious as if he bore the whole responsibility of the national character, must be inspired by the worthiest motives to elect the worthiest means, to secure the worthiest aims; or in other words, to carry out the great rule of social peace and prosperity, which is expressed in the second table of God's great law, to "love our neighbour as ourselves." And since the law of God is essentially a unit and an integer, and cannot be split into fragments to be used in part, and in part rejected; since there is no true morality which is not based on conscience; and since conscience has its life breathed into it only by piety, it follows that this national religion must take in the first and great commandment of the moral code, and hold itself as profoundly reverent towards the claims of God, as it is affectionately considerate of the mutual rights and interests of the people. This is the religion necessary to a popular government, not only in its true theory, but in its practical success likewise. For we

can easily see that wherever there is freedom, the chiefest danger of the Republic springs from within rather than presses from abroad; comes from corruption more than from invasion; and for a like reason the strength and glory of a free government are only the blossoms of its own virtues begotten of itself, and nourished by its own sap and power of right life. We can see, therefore, how the Divine promise to a religious nation is illustrated by the law of cause and effect, and most eminently in a popular government such as ours. Both the promise and the law warrant the conclusion, that the national virtue is the guarantee of national prosperity. But this conclusion starts a fresh inquiry, Why is the Divine promise attached to a particular form of religious expression, a mere ritual service? Is the observance of the Sabbath, as an outward institute, so necessary a proof of the people's religion, that its non-observance will entail the forfeiture of the Divine favour and the failure of the nation? If it can be shown that the Sabbath is a condition without which

religion can not thrive, then it becomes at once invested with all the solemnity of importance which belongs to religion itself. As an assigned and natural expression of the public religion, it may be regarded as inseparable from the existence of religion. The necessity of some such expression grows out of a certain principle that lies back in the nature of things, which may be explained thus. The world is only a compound of two simple elements, *force* and *form*, of which each is the complement of the other. Take either away, and there is no world. Take away force, and the form is a dead organism. Take away form, and force is such a tricksey and intangible thing, with no outline or complexion, that we have no language to describe it. Thought itself cannot arrest it. Its name is only like the X in Algebra, an unknown quantity. Out of this necessary constitution of force and form springs the great law of expression, which pervades and penetrates the world. It begins with the widest generality, and ends in the minutest particularity. The abstract must

have a concrete, the conception must body itself forth in a phenomenon; the spiritual must mate itself with the material; soul with sense, and Deity with incarnation. Truth must create a book; mind must have a brain to think with; affection a heart to love with, and a tongue to tell its love, or at least a grave-stone. Take away from any of these vital forces their appropriate forms and expressions, and you reduce the forces themselves to such a shrunk and shrivelled condition, that you can have no proof of their existence. Their life has fallen into a catalepsy. Now we are not to suppose that the great vital force of man's moral being, his religion, is exempt from this law of expression. Faith, too, must have its confession. While with the heart man believeth unto justification, with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. And when you extend that faith, so that it becomes the faith of a community, then the confession must take a definite and fixed form. It must become an *institute*, palpable, plain, and public. Hence the system of Christian faith takes of a necessity a cor-

porate form. Hence the necessity of a visible church, and hence, too, the host of God's elect are made a "*sacramental* host." Not that a private person can not have a religious heart without the tangible sacraments, or that he can not pray but in the worship of the visible church. Not that he may not express his religion, faith and love in other ways, but that he may and must express them *thus:* That since his faith is a common faith, its expression shall be common, and therefore its form must in the nature of things be determined and fixed.

Under the same category as the visible church and its sacramental and public ordinances, we may place the Sabbath as one of those definite *institutes* which express in the most emphatic form the religion of the community, and which as a form of expression becomes indispensable to the conservation of the power, if not of the very life itself, of religion. Abolish the Sabbath as the time for fixed and periodic religious service—leave it to the arbitrary choice of individuals to determine their own times of special worship and religious

duties, and you expose the religion of the people to a fearful trial. You leave each man to his unassisted piety—you trust his personal courage and conscience to tear him loose from the clinging cares and associations of the world to break through the forces that press around to hold him where he is; companions, businesses, hospitalities, recreations; and, with a heroism most rare, to refuse every temptation, and to go away by himself and spend his own self-chosen Sabbath in lonely worship of prayer and thanks. And he must endure this small martyrdom with every return of his holy day. Is any ordinary piety of a fibre strong enough to stand this tug and strain, week by week? Would it not succumb at last, weary and worn out with the long struggle against its circumstances until the religion of individuals, one by one, having given way, the religion of the community would die out? Or if, after all, conscience should be too strong for this, would not this striving and tempted man, who would keep his holiness alive, seek sympathy from others labouring and worried like himself?

Would they not band themselves into a fellowship in imitation of the visible church, and spread their common rites and ordinances throughout the land, and *invent* a Sabbath as a day of periodical religion—a monument and memorial of the faith to keep it perpetual and make it universal? They would be driven to it by the necessities of piety to save their religion from being exhausted by too much conflict and too little support. Just as our fasts and thanksgivings are more solemn and edifying, because they are public or national; just as our individual patriotism derives a fresh glow and new stir from the fourth of July or the birthday of Washington, when the nation's heart beats aloud with the same pulse as ours; so do the convictions, purposes, beliefs, hopes and impulses of our personal religious life get periodical force and vigour from the sanctions, sympathies, supports and stimulants of a Sabbath sacredly and universally kept, re-attesting to men's eyes and ears what their hearts had already accepted, yet tremulously held, the momentous worth and grandeur to

each soul of that religion which was thus grandly and publicly symbolized. Some sacred day, to be constantly distinguished from week-day and working-day, is therefore a constant necessity of the religious life of any community of men.

How much greater its worth and power, then, when the day is not invented, but assigned and sanctioned from Heaven, bearing on its front not only the stamp of human expediency, but the august signature of the Father of our lives.

But in order to illustrate the influences of the Sabbath well kept, upon the character of a people, let us dwell upon those influences severally. Consider, then, the educational power of the Sabbath; and, first, its power of educating the mind. Since we have adopted it as an axiom in our politics, that the prosperity of a free people depends upon their intelligence as well as their virtue, the question is invested with first-rate importance, how far the Sabbath is an educator of the intellect. I think the question may be answered by challenging the competition of

any and every other sort of instruction. If we except some particular departments of learning, such as the exact and the progressive sciences, the sources of mental culture belonging to the Sabbath are rich and rare beyond parallel.

Take, for example, that part of education which consists in supplying the mind with the facts and suggestions which may be called the mind's furniture, the material of thought, such as comes from reading, and makes what Sir Francis Bacon calls "a full man." The Sabbath supplies this to the mind, because it is all found in the Bible, and the Sabbath is the Bible's peculiar day. Its readings and preachings are derived from that book of books, and so identified are they in purpose and in practice, that we never conceive of a religious Sabbath but as the background of a picture on which the high lights and the richest tints are formed of the instructions, suggestions and promises of the word of God. Whatever of instruction, therefore, the Bible can furnish to the intellect of man, is part and parcel of the worth

of the Sabbath. How various that instruction is! There is history which, so far as it goes, is more authentic than any other ancient records of the race. There are facts and phenomena of nature which are just as truly matters for scientific inquiry as any more recent. There is poetry, descriptive, suggestive, and lyrical, grander than Homer, more spiritual than Wordsworth, more tenderly touching than Tennyson; eloquence of every sort, from the grandly vehement to the meltingly pathetic; rhetoric that presents the most apt and striking combinations of human language, and in every form of composition, narrative, didactic, and dramatic. There are maxims of life and manners, pithy and sententious, that cling like burs to the memory, and are full of "the seeds of things;" prudential rules of a wise life, furnishing every man with a truth just suited to every chance need of his business or behaviour. Such is this many-sided book as a mere vehicle for instruction to the mind. No man can study its language fresh from the wells of English undefiled, without finding his faculties

stirred and refreshed, his understanding informed, his taste refined, his judgment improved, and his whole mental stature grown taller and fuller. Besides this education which furnishes the mind, there is a still better sort which disciplines and strengthens it; and this, too, comes from the same source, the Sabbath and its Bible. This special benefit to the intellect proceeds from the character of the themes presented by the Sabbath and the Bible,—the grandest and profoundest that can be proposed to an intelligent being. They are God, his being, his attributes, his law, his providence, his counsels of judgment and of grace, the wonderful plan of redemption, involving the humiliation, the mediation, and the royal triumph of the Redeemer; Eternity with its deep, abysmal truths, involving the destinies of all immortal creatures; and Man, his nature and character; man spiritual and sensual too; his weakness, and his capacity for great strength; his sin, and his potential holiness; his danger, and his hopes; his guilt, and its cleansing; his soul-sickness, and its divine

cure; his death, and his resurrection of immortality, all crowned by the sublime inquest of a universal judgment. Here are themes which never could occur spontaneously to the minds of ordinary men; and if to extraordinary men, they could come only as dreams or snatches of thought; self speculations and gymnastics of the mind, with no solemn sanction, no reality, and so no profit. But the Sabbath forces them forward as great live truths upon the thoughts of men. They must face them, grasp them, and grapple with them seriously. And this puts the mind to its stoutest mettle. It has to stretch itself to the grandest issues of thought; has to go down into the depths and up to the heights of contemplation; down into the principles of things, and up to their consummation; to contemplate God, and to anatomize itself; to survey the outside universe, and to explore the microcosm of man's inner nature; to become familiar with the great principles of law; to trace the harmony of Providence as it is explained by faith, and to thread the labyrinths of human

history by the clue of Christ's mediatorial reign. I do not say that any of these huge themes, jutting out from the dark infinitude, can be thoroughly explored and comprehended by the best intellect of man. But no intellect can come in front of them without a strange consciousness of development. The very contact of the mind with thoughts and themes like these energises it, puts life into it. And when these themes are pronounced as revelations, as facts and realities made known to man by God himself; the mind, pressed from within by the strongest incentive it is capable of, endeavours to hold and master them and make them a part of itself. The very effort inspires strength, makes the mind stalwart and robust, and secures the best result of the highest disciplinary education. Suppose a man, who is destitute of the ordinary facilities of education, to devote the fifty-two Sabbaths of the year to the studious contemplation of these Sabbath themes, and so for twenty years. Does any one doubt that the education of these more than thousand days, almost as much as

the four years of a collegiate life, would find him far in advance of his associates in all the proofs and fruits of mental culture? Would he not be a first-rate subject of a free government, with a riper intelligence than most men, fitter than most men to cast a ballot, if he were not indeed fit to govern a commonwealth? A great advantage of this education of the Sabbath is, that it is periodical; not so frequent as to make it a drudgery, and not so rare as to endanger the permanence of its impression. It is to every class of men, specially and peculiarly, a rest and refreshing. To the industrial classes, whose vocations lie among solid and material things, and to the commercial class, whose life is the arithmetic of earthly values and products, the Sabbath gives opportunity and incitement to a fresh set of faculties, and opens the windows of the mind, to let in the fresh air of thoughts from God and a better life. And even to the classes whose business is thought, the Sabbath is still a rest, while it is still an education. The lawyer escapes from the perplexities of con-

flicting precedents, contradictory judgments, and equivocal proprieties, into the pure light of truth and the glorious certainties of righteousness. And the physician can separate himself awhile from the painful study of second causes to familiarize his mind with the workings of the first cause. And the men of science and philosophy would lose nothing, but gain much, by taking God's existence as a standpoint of thought for a while; and God's government and providence as a controlling fact in nature, and the foundation of a system of final causes. Such Sabbath thoughts would be no less a rest to them than to the laborious classes. For to those whose habit of life is thinking, the maxim of Sir William Jones is always true, that "the change of study is recreation enough." Such a mental education is peculiarly adapted to form the citizenship of a free government. For it begets that peculiar mental characteristic which we call intelligence; that is, not a mere technical skill in certain branches of learning which sharpen the mind but do not broaden it—which make the mind

expert without making it wise; a sort of Austrian education, fitting a man to be a clever subject of a despotism, but not a free citizen of a popular government—not that—but, instead of that, an education which makes the whole mind of larger growth; broader, deeper and solider at the same time, with more of muscle of manhood, of general effectiveness and power of thinking. This is plainly the education we need. Can there be a doubt whether this is the very education conferred by the Sabbath, and not reached—not even imitated in any other school?

The other indispensable qualification for the citizen of a Republic, besides intelligence, is what is called virtue—a cultivated moral sense; an enlightened conscience. This and the due culture of the intellect are the Jachin and Boaz of that grand political structure which we hold almost as sacred as a temple—a free Republic. Consider, then, the Sabbath as an educator of the conscience. It is too late in the world's history to vindicate the claims of the Bible in this respect. The

acknowledgment has long ago been extracted or extorted from all sorts of men, that its code of morals is not only matchless, but amazing. And every week this body of moral precept and principle is presented and pressed home upon a Sabbath-keeping community. The grand peculiarity of this morality is, that it recognizes the word ought as an imperative word in every question of ethical conduct. It roots and grounds itself on the conscience. It does not palter with great principles, like Paley, and give up man's noble moral sense to be hoodwinked, and led hither and yon by a dwarfed, limping, near-sighted expediency. It does not, like Jeremy Bentham, propose the greatest happiness of the greatest number, as the rule of conduct, requiring omniscience to determine the smallest proprieties of life, and leaving the conscience more dismally befogged than nature made it. So singular, in fact, is the Bible on its recognition of right and wrong, as absolute facts or principles, that in all the progress of the ages no system of ethics was ever enunciated which was based on this

distinction alone until the Christian, Butler, rescued this divine principle from the mob of human speculations, where it was in danger of being strangled or torn to pieces, and clothed it afresh in the graceful robe of a Christian philosophy. But it was always in the Bible whole, simple and grand; the principle that men must do right, because they ought; the fact that they have a conscience to enforce that ought; that conscience is an imperial faculty transferred from Heaven, armed with Divine prerogatives to approve with sweet peace when man obeyed God, and to punish with stings of scorpions when he refused and rebelled. And it is in the Bible still—this standard of moral conduct — in all its simplicity, integrity and grandeur. It is the moral teaching of the Sabbath. It is pronounced to the ears of every keeper of the Sabbath. And not to his ear only, but to his soul. For it is God's voice that speaks, and speaks with the authority of a creator and the tenderness of a father—speaks alike from Sinai and from Calvary—speaks with the sanctions of eternity and the persua-

sions of love; and while it rouses the conscience to the ennobling sense of duty, changes the old heart to a new, and inspires it with such love for the right, that the law of God may be said to be written within it. This is the finished product of moral character, begotten legitimately of the Sabbath. It is, indeed, a converted and Christian character. But even where it fails of this completeness of result, it is still the most perfect plan of moral instruction and training. No person can come into habitual contact and contemplation of such instruction without deriving a certain clearness and strength to his moral convictions which will elevate his whole manhood. Taught of God, he will be both independent of men and reverent to authority. But his independence, being conscientious, will be without arrogance, and his reverence, being inspired, will be without servility. Is not this the beau ideal of moral manhood, animated and actuated with the conscious dignity of duty? Out of this grow loyalty, patriotism, the love of order, and of law; and, indeed, every civic virtue. And when

diffused abroad, out of it comes a controlling, national conscience which unites the whole people in the repressing of public wrong, and the maintenance and defence of universal right.

Is not the moral demand of the Republic met, then? Is not such morality a fit qualification for its citizenship? Is such morality taught and enforced in any other school, as it is by the schooling of the Sabbath?

We may rest here from the discussion of the direct influence of the Sabbath as an educational power. But we can hardly help remembering another sort of influence which, though indirect, is still powerful and very wholesome. It arises out of the very subsistence of the Sabbath as a sacred and public day, with all its associations and incidents. The very pausing from work, the release from the heat, the hurry, the noise, the dust of the week day, to the cleanliness, the order and sobriety of a holy day, is of itself a social influence that is very salutary. The mingling of all classes upon the one platform of the church on terms that presuppose the equality of all, praying

the same prayers, listening to the same divine truths that were meant for all alike, all stirred alike by the same power or pathos of its appeals and persuasions, the felt force of that sympathy which makes the whole world kin, combining the self-respect of the individual manhood with the gentle feelings of a common brotherhood; here is the much needed antidote to that envy of rivalry, which is the peculiar danger of a popular community, where the separation of classes is not determined by law or caste, and where all are competitors for equal honours or success. These, and like these, are the indirect influences of the Sabbath, surrounding the character and pressing like the atmosphere upon every inch of it. It throws over the robust form of the political character the grace of a social charm, and smooths the ruggedness of personal independence with that best of good breeding, viz, the inbred kindness of brotherhood and charity. Of all these benefits, then, the mental, the moral and the social, may not the Christian Sabbath claim the maternity? I do not disparage other

supposable means and agencies for effecting these results, nor do I draw any comparison of advantage with them. It is enough to know that the positive, if not the singular power, of the Sabbath, has been fairly stated. If so, it is but an equivalent statement to say, that to the purity and stability of a popular government the Sabbath is absolutely indispensable. And from this statement there is but a single step to the practical conclusion, that among us the Sabbath ought to be maintained as a national institute, a power of the state expressing the civic form of religion; the fixed confession of the nation's allegiance to Him who is King of other kings, and Lord of all other lords.

Pardon me, then, for a few remaining words touching the methods for its maintenance. The first and most obvious of these is the requisition to be made by the public upon the public, that the Sabbath, when kept, shall be kept holy. It were a fallacy in logic, and a perversion in morals, to claim that the Sabbath shall be a festival, and not a sacred festival. The

same authority that prescribes the appointment, covers likewise its conditions. Nay, the very pith and emphasis of the appointment is concentrated in the one word "holy." If man were only an animal, with no moral activities and capacities for evil, it might be enough to prescribe a stated rest of one day in seven, as a mere sanatory provision for the recruiting of his physical powers; and the result, as shown by experience, would be a large economy of life and of labour. But when with all his susceptibilities, mental, moral and social, you turn him loose from labour at stated intervals upon a world of unregulated excitements, with no object suited to the day but the negative one of doing no work: then you turn the day of grace and moral health into a season of temptation. You throw down the moral barriers with which even the work of the week day screens his nature against wickedness, and you make him accessible at every point of his character to all the surrounding influences of evil. The inevitable result will be, that all the moral power of the Sabbath will be transmuted to

evil, on the principle that whatever is most effective for good becomes by perversion proportionately bad; on the principle that an archangel ruined becomes the chief of the fiends. The Sabbath thus becomes a Saturnalia; the day of rest, a day of idleness; the Devil's holiday with the idle man for his playfellow.

The Sabbath, therefore, must be maintained as a public institute in the integrity of its sacredness, and its first safeguard is the protection of the laws. Although the constitutionality of the Sabbath is no longer an open question, yet the extent to which fresh legislation may be carried is, and has been, a matter of contest. No doubt the genius of our system would dictate extreme caution in the way of the positive enforcement of Sabbath duties. Yet, since the whole presumption of law and precedent is in favour of the Sabbath as an existing religious institute, there would seem to be no reason why a negative and defensive legislation may not be most stringent and peremptory, saving the liberty of the individual conscience by not exacting a personal worship;

but saving, too, the purity of the public conscience by forbidding the open desecration of the public worshipping day. There may be at least a legislative prohibition of such amusements and revelries as amount to a moral nuisance. There may be at least a bar placed upon that moral dishonesty which robs God of the seventh, when he has already given us the six days of life. The community owes to itself, as an act of self-preservation, such conservative legislation as this. The people owe it to their fathers, in maintaining their legacy of a free government, to cling likewise to those vital conditions of the bequest, which were the first cost of the possession, and are now its main security.

If opposition should arise from a part of the population born and bred under another political sky, who would plant in our soil their exotic ideas of national morality and popular rights, let our legislation be as an appeal to their modesty to enjoy our privileges without invading our proprieties. Let them not wrong the warm-hearted welcome to our political

household, by disturbing the order and peace of the family.

Another safeguard of the Sabbath may be found in the diligent use of the system of Sunday Schools. Let the children of recusant foreigners be gathered from all quarters to be taught and trained for a Christian life, and with the next generation the anti-Sabbath virus will be purged from the body politic, and we shall all be religiously as well as nationally American.

And not to multiply expedients, let all those who cherish the Sabbath as a national institute to be kept holy to the Lord, extend their personal influence, negative and positive, to its thorough and due observance. Remember the holiness of its afternoon as well as of its morning. Do not attempt, by the worship of the church, to buy an indulgence for the revelries of the dining-room. Do not select God's festival time for man's feasting time. Do not make the social duty of hospitality override the divine duty of communion with God. Let every family that believes in the Sabbath live as becomes their faith.

Let the domestic Sabbath be kept, and the national Sabbath will not be destroyed. Holy homes will make a holy nation, chosen of the Lord, and honourable. In virtue of that fixed law of the universe by which the meek inherit the earth; the law which draws temporal blessings in the train of moral well-doing as the waters close in and follow the wake of the ship—by that law, guaranteed by God's promise, it will happen that the nation "will be exalted to ride upon the high places of the earth," receiving the tribute of acknowledgment from all the earth, that a free government is the crown and perfection of man's civil existence. And it shall "be fed with the heritage of Jacob;" an influence and power of blessing whose dominion shall be universal, "from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth," and lasting as the covenant of God. "For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

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